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20
ENTS

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CONTENTS

THE FIGHT OF THE STEEL WORKERS FOR THEIR UNION ... 483
By JACK STACHEL

THE FILIPINO MASSES ENTER THE STAGE OF ARMED STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM ... 500
By HARRISON GEORGE

THE STRUGGLE FOR THE UNITED FRONT ... 510
(*Contribution to the discussion preceding the Seventh World Congress of the Comintern*)
By CLARENCE A. HATHAWAY

APPROACHING THE SEVENTH WORLD CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL ... 518
Prepared for the Agit-Prop Commission, Central Committee, Communist Party, U.S.A., by ALEX BITTELMAN

THE UNEMPLOYMENT MOVEMENT IN THE U.S.A. ... 528
By HERBERT BENJAMIN

INITIATING LABOR PARTY TICKETS ... 548
By RALPH SHAW

TOWARD THE STUDY OF FASCIZATION IN THE UNITED STATES ... 558
(*A discussion article*)
By F. BROWN

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE STRUGGLE FOR NEGRO RIGHTS 569
[*Resolution Adopted by the Chicago District Committee of the C. P. on Work in Chicago South Side* (*Sections* 2, 7, *and* 11).]

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The Fight of the Steel Workers for Their Union

By JACK STACHEL

THE situation now existing within the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers (hereafter called A.A. in this article) concerns vitally, not alone the steel workers, but all workers, the whole labor movement. As is well known to most of the readers, the Mike Tighe leadership carried through the expulsion of lodges comprising the majority of the steel workers organized in the A.A. The Tighe-controlled convention, consisting of only delegates seated by the machine, after barring the delegates representing the majority of the steel workers, approved these expulsions.

Since the influx of new workers into the American Federation of Labor and the growth within it of the rank-and-file movement (a development which is most closely connected with the growth of the Federation in the recent period), in no industry, in no A. F. of L. union, although there are present similar developments, has the situation reached such a sharp stage. Why is this so? It is, to be sure, no mere accident. The developments in the A.A., the very rapid maturing of the situation, the sharp character of the struggle are explainable by the fact that we are here dealing with an industry that is the very heart of the economy of the country, an industry that is not only basic in times of peace, but is *the* war industry. It is an industry that is controlled by the gigantic corporations that control the very life of the country. And in this industry especially, the capitalists have at all times been most outspoken against the trade unions, resorting to the most brutal and bloody suppression of the workers' struggles. It is the industry where in the recent period the employers have developed, to a larger extent than anywhere else, their company unions. And in no industry have the workers seen so glaringly the role of the N.R.A. as an instrument of the capitalists.

But this is not all. Perhaps in no A. F. of L. union is there such a bankrupt, impotent, and corrupt leadership as that headed by Mike Tighe, whose policies have always been the prevention of the organization of the steel workers. For, after all, what are the issues around which the inner struggle is being fought in all the trade unions? It is over policies and leadership. The rank and file wish to organize the industry and fight for better conditions. The bu-

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reaucrats fear the organization of the workers and have in mind only one thing—to retain control over the organization. It is thus clear that the sharp struggle raging in the A.A. is concerned with the desire of the steel workers to organize and struggle, while Mike Tighe and his machine stand in the way of the desires of the rank and file.

It is because of these considerations that the struggle now raging in the A.A. is symptomatic of the whole development in the trade-union movement. Here the situation merely appears in a maturer and sharper form. But everywhere the tendency is the same, and for the same reasons. Everywhere the workers join the unions with the intention of struggling for better conditions, of building a powerful and militant trade union. And everywhere they find the A. F. of L. bureaucracy with its class collaboration policies standing in the way, siding with the employers, sometimes more openly, at others more concealed, but everywhere the same.

I

Let us consider the general development in the trade-union movement for the past two years. Perhaps over a million workers joined the A. F. of L. unions. In most cases the workers organized locals without any support from the A. F. of L. bureaucracy and even despite its opposition, despite the obstacles placed in their path through the craft union system, high initiation and dues payments, discrimination against Negro workers, women and youth labor, as well as against all unemployed. The Green-Lewis leadership of the A. F. of L., instead of organizing these workers for struggle, pursued from the outset a policy of diverting the efforts of the workers from struggle and put forward reliance upon the N.R.A. as the method of winning the demands of the workers. They did everything possible to prevent the strike movement, especially among the mining, steel, automobile, marine, rubber, and textile workers. Where they could not prevent the strike struggles, they did everything possible to disrupt them through arbitration schemes, through the "Red scare", which was auxiliary to the brutal suppression of the strikes through force and violence. It was this A. F. of L. leadership that is responsible for the no-strike agreement in the mining industry, for the auto code with the infamous merit clause, for the disruption of the national textile strike at the time when the workers were in a position to force the textile barons to grant their demands. Recently we have seen how this leadership prevented the struggle of the rubber workers and forced the calling off of the Toledo auto strike, which could have become a nation-wide strike, through the threat of withdrawing the charter unless the strike was called off.

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The whole policy of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy has been one of preventing the growth of the trade unions, by their craft unionism, which cannot organize the workers in the mass production industries; by the high dues system, etc. And where, despite these obstacles, the workers have joined the unions, the bureaucrats, through their class collaboration and strikebreaking policy, bring such discouragement to the workers that they play right into the hands of the employers and the company unions, who use these very methods of the bureaucrats as arguments against the whole trade-union movement.

But the A. F. of L. bureaucracy has not had such smooth sailing recently. Thanks to its correct policies and energetic work, our Party has become a very important factor in counteracting the policies of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy and their demoralizing effect upon the trade unions. More and more strikes have been and are being organized in spite of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy. The workers in the federal locals of auto, rubber and other industries refuse to allow themselves to be broken up into craft unions and are boldly demanding the building of a national industrial union within the A. F. of L. out of the scattered federal locals. There are springing up rank-and-file organizing committees that have been able to keep the organization together and increase their membership even in the face of all attacks, both from the employers as well as from the trade-union bureaucrats.

The developments in the longshoremen's struggle on the West Coast; the heroic San Francisco general strike; the winning of leadership by the progressive forces in the I.L.A. local in San Francisco; the building of the Marine Workers Federation on the West Coast, comprising 26 different unions with a membership of 35,000, are but indications of what is taking place in the A. F. of L. unions, thanks to the fighting spirit of the rank and file and the guidance and leadership which the Communists, though still a small group, are giving to the workers. The struggles among the silk and dye workers in Paterson, both with regard to the fight for the maintenance of conditions and the election of a rank-and-file leadership, are another example. These good examples are being duplicated on a smaller scale in dozens of localities and numerous unions.

II

These excellent instances of the growth of the rank-and-file movement show two important things. First, that if the Green-Woll-Lewis leadership were not acting in the service of the capitalists, if there were a real workers' leadership at the head of the A. F. of L. unions, if the A. F. of L. followed the road of struggle instead of the road of class collaboration, it would be possible to build a

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powerful trade-union movement, not of three or four million workers, but of 15 or 20 million. And second, they show that only the workers themselves, with the support of the Communist Party, can build such a powerful trade-union movement, and that it will be built only over the heads of the Greens, the Tighes and the Lewises.

The A. F. of L. bureaucracy in all industries, where unable to check the revolt of the rank and file as a result of growing disillusionment with the "New Deal" and rebellion against the anti-democratic procedures through which the class collaboration policies are being forced upon them, initiated a campaign against the Communists, calling for their expulsion from the trade unions. As we already know, the expulsion order issued by the Executive Council of the A. F. of L. has turned out until now to be a grand fiasco. The rank and file in the locals refused to expel the Communists. At the very time when this order was issued, thousands of Communists together with other militant workers transferred from the independent to the A. F. of L. unions through the local unions. Hundreds of A. F. of L. members in some of the most important industries joined the Communist Party. All this is a result of the growing understanding on the part of the rank and file in the A. F. of L. that the Communists fight with them in the front ranks against the employers' attacks, that they fight for the unity of the trade unions, while the A. F. of L. bureaucracy is trying to divide the workers.

The A. F. of L. bureaucracy did not succeed, through its policies of surrender, in convincing the most powerful employers in the basic industries to allow them to organize the workers from the top, which is the method they pursue. The employers refuse to take chances on the ability of the A. F. of L. bureaucrats to control the rank and file. Only as a last resort do they seek out these bureaucrats and make such agreements directed against the interests of the workers. As a result of this, the A. F. of L. bureaucracy finds itself in a crisis—a crisis in relation to the employers and the government, a crisis in relation to the rank and file. And, finally, this has already led to a sharpened cleavage among the very top leaders of the A. F. of L.

It is in this situation that we must understand the ready acceptance by the A. F. of L. bureaucrats of the so-called truce recently reached between them and Roosevelt, at the very moment when the administration forced through Congress the $50 a month maximum wage on relief projects. In return, the A. F. of L. bureaucracy perhaps was promised the passage of the much advertised Wagner Bill, a bill in every sense detrimental to the interests of the workers, and, if judged by the past performances of Section 7a, of even doubtful value to the bureaucracy. But already these bureaucrats

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have fully repaid the capitalists and the government for any promises made to them. They have agreed to the extension of the old coal agreement; they have prevented the rubber strike; they have stifled the developing auto strike, and have discouraged every act of resistance on the part of the textile workers in the face of the growing attack on them, following Gorman's "victory" and President Roosevelt's "investigations".

The crisis within the A. F. of L. Executive Council is, of course, not over policies for and against the workers. Reflecting the differences in the camp of the bourgeoisie itself, these labor lieutenants of capitalism are fighting over questions as how best to check and control the rank and file, how to prevent strikes, how to keep the masses chained to the policies of class collaboration. Moreover, people like John L. Lewis fear that the old craft union policies, applied to such industries as auto, rubber and steel, may well lead to the formation of mass industrial unions outside the A. F. of L. Furthermore, Lewis believes that through strongly centralized, national industrial unions, led by people like himself, he can convince the employers that he can offer the best guarantees against strikes through such model anti-strike agreements as he signed in the name of the coal miners. In this view John L. Lewis and Major Berry, both the most outspoken and infamous strike-breakers in the country, are joined by such men like Hugh Johnson; Moley, the original brain-truster of President Roosevelt; and many industrialists and bankers. It is clear that the fight for militant industrial class trade unions is the fight of the masses and will be won, not only in the struggle against the Greens and the Wolls, but against the Lewises and Berrys as well.

It is necessary to be clear on these developments within the A. F. of L. as a whole, in order to appreciate fully the situation existing in the A.A. and the implications of the steel situation. Furthermore, even among the progressive forces there are still illusions regarding John L. Lewis who, having his own game in mind, in conversation with some of the leaders of the rank-and-file movement in the steel industry has declared his disapproval of the expulsions carried through by Mike Tighe. In fact, even Bill Green has not dared openly to approve the expulsions, because of the sentiment among the workers. But, in fact, neither of these gentlemen has lifted a finger against the Mike Tighe splitting policies. It is clear that the steel workers will not gain their aims through reliance upon Green or Lewis. They will win by fighting more aggressively and more stubbornly as part of the rank-and-file movement throughout the A. F. of L. And if Green and Lewis will be forced to beat a retreat as far as the expulsions in the A.A. is concerned, it will not be because of anything else but the growing

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pressure of this rank-and-file movement. Let us now return to the A.A. convention.

During the year 1933, tens of thousands of steel workers joined the A.A. This increase in membership took place despite the passivity and obstruction of the Tighe machine. It was to a large extent, as in other industries, stimulated by the activity and strike leadership of the independent industrial unions, in this case the Steel and Metal Workers Industrial Union. During this period important strikes of these newly organized workers took place. Outstanding among these were the strikes in Ambridge, Clairton, and Weirton, the last two of which were led by the A.A. organizations. The Tighe machine refused to sanction these strikes officially, at the same time doing everything possible to disrupt them. Great resentment followed among the rank and file.

This feeling among the rank and file was registered at the fifty-ninth A.A. convention. The Tighe machine was taken by surprise. The newly organized workers and lodges, disregarding the whole anti-democratic procedure of the Tighe machine, succeeded in seating the delegates from all lodges, outvoting the machine. The convention adopted a set of economic demands expressing the interests of the steel workers. It repudiated reliance on N.R.A. and other class collaboration schemes. It decided to press these demands, declaring a general strike if the steel barons refused to grant these demands, which included the six-hour day, $1 an hour, equality for the Negro steel workers, recognition of the union, etc. The convention also adopted the Workers' Unemployment, Old Age, and Social Insurance Bill (H.R. 2827). The convention further showed its lack of confidence in the Tighe machine by electing a Committee of Ten to be in charge of conducting the negotiations and prepare the strike.

The Tighe machine which, however, remained in office did not accept this blow as final. It began to maneuver to disrupt the strike preparations. It refused to cooperate with the Committee of Ten. It combined with the N.R.A. administration openly against the steel workers. The Committee of Ten was called to Washington on numerous occasions to confer. In fact, it did little to prepare the strike, also falling into the trap of the "Washington run-around". Then, as the date set for the strike neared, the 59th convention was reconvened, and Bill Green came to the convention in the name of President Roosevelt with a proposal on the prevention of the strike. Bill Green was able to swing the convention for this proposal. What this proposal has brought them, the steel workers are all agreed upon today. It brought them nothing. It was a deadly blow against their interests. It was a victory for the steel trust and its company unions. But it was not only Tighe or Green or even Roosevelt that had responsibility for tricking the steel work-

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ers. Here the Committee of Ten, which still enjoyed the confidence of the steel workers, played the decisive role. Some, of course, were consciously following Tighe and Green; others, as was shown by later developments, were themselves tricked because of their inexperience. Our Party was handicapped from the beginning by the fact that, for the most part, it had to bring forward its criticism and policies from the outside. Only two Communists, themselves new and inexperienced, attended the convention as delegates.

There can be no question about the fact that, had the Committee of Ten stood fast and prepared and called the strike, it could have developed into a strike surpassing even the historic 1919 steel strike. Such a struggle would have had tremendous influence on the whole course of development of the workers' movement in the country. Small wonder that all forces were used to prevent the strike. But, instead, there followed demoralization among the A.A. members and a heavy falling off in membership.

IV

This situation continued until the fall of 1934. At this time two developments took place, which were of great importance to the steel workers. First, a number of the leading rank-and-file forces, some of whom were formerly part of the Committee of Ten, came together and mapped out a program of action on the basis of the decisions of the 59th convention. They declared that the steel workers could expect nothing from the N.R.A. and the Steel Labor Board. They told the steel workers that Mike Tighe and the whole executive board of the A.A. were sabotaging the decisions of the 59th convention. They placed the task of organizing the steel workers into the A.A., the development of a fight for the demands of the steel workers, upon the rank and file themselves. These same rank-and-file leaders occupied leading posts in the Sixth District organization of the A.A. The Sixth District adopted this program of action and decided to publish the *Progressive Steel Worker* as a weapon in this fight. Second, about the same time, the Steel and Metal Workers Industrial Union, after a thorough survey of the situation, decided to dissolve the steel section of the union and transfer its members who were steel workers into the Amalgamated Association. While not numerically large, these members, in many cases with good experience, were an important addition to the fighting forces in the A.A. The Sixth District leadership of the A.A., understanding that the fight could not be won in one district, made contacts with other lodges and the other District organizations. It found the same trend among the rank and file and among the rank-and-file leaders as in the Sixth District. The rank-and-file movement in the A.A. had become a nation-wide movement.

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On December 30 a joint meeting of the various District organizations of the A.A. was called for the purpose of planning a drive to organize the unorganized. This meeting was held in the headquarters of the A.A., with all national officials present, except Mike Tighe. This meeting, which was held strictly within the constitutional rights of the membership, decided to convene a conference of the lodges of all districts on February 3 on the same basis as the one that was being held. None of the national officials raised any objections. But, just prior to the February 3 conference, Mike Tighe sent out a letter threatening the expulsion of all lodges that would participate in the conference. This conference was again for the purpose of organizing the unorganized into the A.A. and to lay plans for the fight for the demands adopted at the 59th convention. In his attack on the conference Tighe was therefore clearly helping the steel trusts. The steel workers recognized this and refused to be terrorized. The conference was held and was attended by many hundreds of delegates from 78 different lodges. Mike Tighe lived up to his threat. Eighteen lodges, among them some of the most important, were expelled. The rank-and-file leaders made every effort to reunite the A.A. They sent delegations to the International Executive Board and to the Executive Council of the A. F. of L. Mike Tighe ejected the committee with the aid of the police. Bill Green listened but did nothing. Lodges who protested these expulsions, which were carried through in every violation of even the A.A. constitution, were expelled for the crime of protesting, even though they had not participated in the February 3 conference.

It is important to note this fact for the following reason. Some of the renegade elements, who are always ready to find every excuse for the action of the bureaucracy, are howling that this conference should not have been called. Here, by the way, it is important to note that of the members elected to the action committee at the February 3 conference all but one remained solid behind the rank-and-file program. The one who went over to Tighe was a Trotskyite who nominated himself and represented no one but himself. There are even in our own ranks some who ask the question: "Would it not have been better to call off the February 3 conference and go to the 60th convention and win the majority at the convention?" The answer is: Decidedly not. The fact is that not only the 18 expelled lodges were barred from the convention, which took place on April 3, but 55 other lodges were refused seats on the ground that they were not in good standing. Furthermore, the Socialist delegate, Rasmussen, was ejected from the convention, even after his credentials had been accepted, because he raised the issue of seating all delegates. Had the

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rank-and-file movement retreated, it would have suffered disorganization. Mike Tighe would have organized the convention in the same high-handed manner, while the rank-and-file movement would have been unprepared to meet such a situation.

It is clear that Mike Tighe was bent on preventing the organization of the steel workers and was ready, as he did, to split the union to achieve his aim. The only thing which could have prevented the expulsion was to do nothing to organize the steel workers. Furthermore, it must be stated that not only did the developing rank-and-file movement check the decline of union membership, but that many thousands of steel workers were brought into the union.

V

With such a situation in the union, with the delegations from the largest and most important lodges barred from the convention, the rank-and-file movement had a very difficult problem in deciding on a course of policy. There were many proposals brought forward by the delegates. In general they can be summarized as follows:

1. *To build an independent union of steel workers;*
2. *To capitulate to Mike Tighe and accept reorganization;*
3. *To declare the expelled and suspended lodges the A.A., since they constituted the majority of the organized steel workers;*
4. *To adopt the policy declaring an emergency to exist in the union, set up an Emergency Committee to carry on the fight for unity and in the meantime to coordinate the work of the expelled and suspended lodges.*

It was the last proposal which was finally adopted.

Among the delegates there was a small minority of Communists. We can say, however, that this small group played a very important role in defeating the tendency which existed among some delegates (and which was very strong especially among those elements who were furthest away from the Party), for a new, independent union. On the basis of the recent discussions, it is hardly necessary to go into detail regarding the dangers involved in such a policy at present. Naturally, we did not, in our fight against a new union, oppose this step in principle as do the Lovestoneite renegades. Our opposition was based on the whole situation in the trade-union movement and not alone in the steel industry. Mike Tighe and Co. would have liked nothing better than to have the rank-and-file conference take this step. As for the second listed tendency, it was never put forward openly as a proposal, although some of the proposals were tantamount to capitulation. This tendency was voiced mostly in the raising of various difficulties which, it was contended, the expelled and suspended lodges would inevitably be confronted with.

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The Communists, analyzing the situation prior to the convention, came to conclusions that can be summed up as follows:

(a) Mike Tighe and Co. are determined to maintain their control of the A.A. even if they have to reduce the union to a mere skeleton and carry through the expulsion of the majority of the membership.

(b) Neither the A.A. leadership nor the A. F. of L. Council has any desire to carry on a campaign to organize steel workers at the present time.

(c) The bulk of the organized steel workers, both in the expelled lodges and in the other lodges, are opposed to the expulsions and on the whole support the program of the February 3 conference.

(d) Because of this attitude of the steel workers, and because of the general Leftward development in the membership of the A. F. of L. unions, the A. F. of L. Council has not found it possible as yet to come out openly in support of Mike Tighe's expulsion policy.

(e) The rank-and-file movement has strengthened its authority nationally among the steel workers, has carried on whatever activity there was developed during this period in the steel industry; and the leaders of the rank-and-file movement have won increasing confidence of the rank and file.

(f) However, there has not yet been developed a mass campaign in the steel industry. This is due to many factors, chiefly, the activity of the steel companies, the company unions, the realization of the workers that the N.R.A. is no protection to them; second, to the unsettled inner situation in the union; and, third, to the fact that the rank-and-file movement has not yet been able fully to organize its forces for a mass campaign.

(g) As a result, it is clear that there is very little prospect of a general strike in the spring, although there are strong possibilities of important mill and regional strikes, especially in connection with the movement for struggle in other industries, particularly among the miners.

In the face of this situation, what is the task of the rank-and-file movement in connection with the 60th Convention of the A.A.?

(a) To fight for the seating of all delegates at the opening and to state that all lodges must be seated and that the whole convention take up the charges. To win the majority of the regularly seated delegates to the convention for a program of seating the delegates from the expelled lodges, reversing the Tighe expulsion

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policy, adopt the program of demands and organizational drive to organize the unorganized basically along the lines of the program adopted at the February 3 conference, and to take steps through the constitutional provisions of the union to oust the Tighe leadership and elect a leadership expressive of the will of the membership.

(b) The rank-and-file movement must convince the delegates to the convention, the members of the A.A., the unorganized steel workers, and the rest of the labor movement that it stands for the unity of the steel workers and of the A.A. For this purpose, it must take steps now and at the convention that will demonstrate this desire and to place the whole responsibility for the present inner situation in the A.A. upon the shoulders of the Tighe leadership. This policy must also aim to force the A. F. of L. Council to take an open stand on these issues. It is, therefore, necessary that we have a minimum program for the creation of unity within the A.A. This minimum program must include: (1) The reinstatement of all lodges expelled and full rights for all members and leaders of these lodges; (2) A definite plan for a campaign to organize the unorganized.

(c) In the event that both of these possibilities do not materialize and Mike Tighe is able to control the convention to approve his policies of expulsion (which, of course, would represent only a minority of the A.A. membership, even though he may cook up a majority of delegates), the majority of the membership of the A.A. which he would declare "expelled" must challenge the Tighe convention and declare themselves to be the only recognized authority representing the A.A. membership. This is to be accomplished by holding a real convention representative of the majority of the membership. This policy, of course, presupposes (which is at present a fact) that the majority of the membership organized in the most important and the largest lodges stand on the platform of the February 3 conference and oppose the expulsion policy. *Should the situation prove different in the course of the convention, new tactics would have to be adopted.*

Such a real convention, representative of the membership of the A.A., would declare itself to be the A.A., would adopt a program of action to organize the steel workers, would make provisions for the removal of the Tighe leadership, and would elect its officers. It would issue a call for unity to the steel workers who would still follow the Tighe machine, take steps, including legal ones, to recover the property of the A.A., and make its appeal to the A. F. of L. Council and the whole labor movement to be recognized as the A.A. It would declare its intention to appeal to every city central body and State Federation of the A. F. of L.,

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and finally to the 55th Convention of the A. F. of L. next October, to be recognized as the A.A. organization.

Naturally, the A.A. organization under the leadership of the rank and file would welcome any steps in the direction of unification of the two claimants, even if it came through the initiative of the A. F. of L. Council, provided the minimum program as outlined under (2b) were adhered to.

(d) We must recognize that there will inevitably arise tendencies for a new union as a result of the treacherous and high-handed action of Tighe and Co. In fact, such tendencies are already to be observed. The rank-and-file movement must definitely declare its opposition to such steps and carry on a sharp fight against such tendencies, which, under the present conditions, can only strengthen the hands of Mike Tighe and Co., who, while now on the defensive in the whole labor movement, would be able to isolate the whole movement under the charge of "dual unionism".

The main arguments for a new union are that the steel workers would not join the A.A. under the leadership of Tighe and the fact that the mass of the workers would be confused by the fact that there would be two organizations claiming to be the A.A. and that this would hamper the organization of the unorganized. Undoubtedly, the arguments bear great weight. But, as against these difficulties, the difficulties in organizing the steel workers at present into a new union would be much more difficult. First, the new union would not remove the confusing element from the fact that "two unions" would claim the field. But, above all, the new union would find it many times more difficult under present conditions and the present stage in the development within the A. F. of L. to mobilize the support of the masses in the other unions, even though these masses may sympathize with the aims of the steel workers.

In deciding our next step in the face of the Tighe provocation, we must bear in mind the whole development within the A. F. of L. and the growing radicalization of the masses, the movement for industrial unionism and rank-and-file control. This movement, which will grow, as well as the struggles that will develop in the steel and other industries, will ultimately decide the issue and decide it in favor of the rank and file and against Tighe, provided we base ourselves on this Leftward development of the masses and remain part of the organized labor movement placing the whole burden for all splitting tactics where it belongs—on the shoulders of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy.

We do not oppose new unions in principle. At certain stages in the development of the labor movement this may be the only way

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in which the organization of the unorganized and the struggle for the unity of the workers could be effectively promoted. We oppose the organization of a new union in the steel industry under present conditions because of the above considerations, which clearly indicate that the best interests of the steel workers demand that we continue the fight to win the A.A. organization for the rank and file and carry on the work of organizing the steel workers in the closest contact with the workers in the other A. F. of L. unions.

But the situation as it existed at the convention of the A.A. and at the conference of expelled and suspended lodges made clear that some modifications in the policy were necessary, and the Communists did not hesitate to support and even propose such changes. Such a possibility was in fact foreseen in the original analysis which stated:

> "Should the situation prove different in the course of the convention, new tactics would have to be adopted."

The final declaration of policy adopted, which the Communists fully supported, reads as follows:

PROPOSED OUTLINE FOR DECLARATION OF POLICY OF THE RANK AND FILE CONFERENCE

"We, the representatives of the A.A. lodges in the most important steel mills of the country, came to the 60th convention with two aims in mind: to establish unity in the ranks of the A.A. and to make plans for the organization of the unorganized steel workers for the purpose of being able to fight effectively for the interests of the steel workers. We have taken every possible step we could to try to achieve unity at the 60th convention. But our delegates have been barred from the convention. Mike Tighe is railroading through his reactionary and splitting policies with a minority of the steel workers represented. It has become clear that Mike Tighe and the National Executive Board will stop at nothing to disrupt the A.A. and to retain control for the purpose of continuing his impotent policies, to expel the majority of the steel workers from the Amalgamated Association.

"We declare to the membership of the A.A. before the steel workers of the country, before all labor, that the responsibility for the division in our ranks rests solely on the shoulders of Mike Tighe and his executive board. We know that the steel workers will not recognize the tsarist dictates of Tighe, which means the expulsion of the majority by a small clique of bureaucrats representing even formally only a minority of the organized steel workers. *Acting in the name of the majority of the membership of the A.A., we, the delegates of A. A. lodges in conference assembled, declare that we do not recognize the decisions of the convention which was held in violation of the constitutional rights of the lodges and the A.A. membership.* To do otherwise would mean to betray the interests

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of the steel workers. It would result only in strengthening the grip of the steel trust over the steel workers. It would lead to the further weakening of our organization through new union movements.

"Our task is clear. *We must build the organization of the steel workers, the Amalgamated Association. We must organize to fight the vicious exploitation of the steel workers. We must fight for the program of demands adopted* at the 59th convention, which Mike Tighe and his followers have sabotaged and repudiated. *We pledge to the A.A. membership and to all steel workers that we will continue the fight by all rightful means to win the A.A. for the rank and file*, to make it the strong union of the steel workers which will be recognized as one of the outstanding organizations in the whole of the American Federation of Labor. We will take this fight for our union, for its unity, to every lodge, to every steel worker, to every A. F. of L. local union, to every A. F. of L. central body, to the coming 55th convention of the A. F. of L. *We will not surrender the union we have built to Mike Tighe.*

"We declare to all lodges of the A.A., to all steel workers, that the situation brought about by the Tighe splitting policies has created a *state of emergency in our union.* To meet this condition we, the regularly elected delegates from the A.A. lodges, representing the majority of the A.A. membership, decide to set up a *National Emergency Council of the Amalgamated Association of Steel and Iron Workers Lodges* to carry through the tasks before us during this state of emergency, and until such time as we shall be able to unite the ranks of the steel workers organized in the Amalgamated Association

"The N.E.C. shall have the power to undertake all measures towards the unification of the A.A., to work for a representative *special national convention of the A.A.*, at which the steel workers shall be able to adopt policies and measures to organize the steel workers of the country. The N.E.C. shall take all necessary measures to organize the effective functioning of the lodges and districts of the A.A. that have ratified the decisions of the conference at special meetings of the lodges called for this purpose. The N.E.C. shall strive to affiliate to the District organizations and in support of the work of the N.E.C. all lodges 'recognized' by Mike Tighe for the purpose of uniting the efforts of all steel workers to achieve our common aims.

"The N.E.C. shall at once map out plans for the organization of the unorganized steel workers, and shall have the power to take all necessary steps, such as collections of dues, issuing of membership cards, publication of *Progressive Steel Worker*, etc., that are vital to the building of the union and the functioning of the lodges so long as the present state of emergency exists.

"The N.E.C. is empowered to call a national representative conference of all lodges at the appropriate time for the purpose of taking further steps to bring about unity within the A.A."

VI

In examining these two documents, the reader can at once see what is involved in proposals (c) and (d) and what is the difference

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between them. In a word, the difference is this. In the first case the expelled and suspended lodges claim to be the A.A. In the policy adopted, the rank-and-file movement does not go so far. On the one hand, they do not accept the decisions of the A.A. convention which expelled the majority of the membership; at the same time, they set up a machinery in the form of an Emergency Committee of A.A. Lodges, still recognizing the existence of the A.A. and fighting for the unification of the A.A.

What were the circumstances that made necessary this change? It was not that the expelled and suspended lodges did not or do not today constitute the majority of the organized steel workers. They do constitute the great majority of the A.A. membership. More than that. At the regular convention controlled by Mike Tighe, there was not a single plant of the U. S. Steel Corporation represented; there was not a lodge of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation. All the big lodges in the most decisive plants are among the expelled and suspended lodges. The reasons for the change were primarily two: first, the fact that after the expulsion of Rasmussen from the Tighe convention, there was developed no opposition to the Tighe machine; second, that not all the lodges that were present at the February 3 conference were at the rank-and-file conference. In fact, the majority of the lodges were neither at the Tighe-controlled convention nor at the conference of the expelled and suspended lodges. Under these circumstances, though the biggest lodges representing the majority of the A.A. membership were at the rank-and-file conference, it was considered inadvisable to declare these lodges the A.A., because this might have the effect of alienating both lodges that were not at either of these gatherings, or lodges that were at the Tighe convention and which might think that they were now being expelled. Had there developed a serious opposition at the Tighe convention, this issue would have been clarified. But this did not happen.

It must be admitted that the failure to develop an opposition at the Tighe-controlled convention revealed one of the basic shortcomings of the rank-and-file movement. To be sure, Tighe was very careful in the seating of delegates. But it can not be denied that thousands of steel workers were represented at this convention. Why, then, did they not fight against Tighe and his machine? This reflected a weakness in contacting these lodges and winning support within them prior to the convention. The Tighe-controlled convention was made up of three types of delegates. First, there were the majority of paid officials and Tighe-machine men from non-existing lodges—lodges of former steel workers who retain membership in the A. A. because of the insurance feature of the organization. This type of delegates constituted the safe majority for the machine.

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Then there were the delegates from the half dozen mills in which the A.A. has signed agreements with the employers. These lodges and their delegates feared that a break with Mike Tighe would endanger their working agreements. They were not yet clear that it is precisely the Tighe policy of destroying the union that is endangering the agreement and that only by a fighting policy can they preserve and improve these agreements. Then there was the third group of delegates who, in the street, gave their consent to the policies of the rank-and-file but who, lacking leadership, could not initiate the fight against Tighe in the face of the machine-controlled convention.

The rank-and-file conference made repeated efforts to gain admission to the convention. When it became clear that this was impossible, the conference went ahead with its business, laying out plans for the organization of the workers, for developing the fight for the demands of the steel workers, for unifying the A.A. The delegates were in a fighting spirit throughout the conference. At no time was there any feeling of pessimism. All the decisions were made with the delegates themselves coming to the conclusion that these were the only and correct decisions to make. The Tighe-controlled convention sounded an entirely different note. There the only business transacted, outside of the approval of the expulsion policy, was the pledging of the support to the N.R.A. and the Wagner Bill, in line with the conference called by the A. F. of L. Council on the 29th of April.

But even the Tighe-controlled convention could not but feel that they did not represent the A.A. membership. Before adjourning, it adopted a resolution which supposedly talks about bringing back the members to the union. But the resolution itself gives away the scheme behind it. What it has in mind is the reorganization of the lodges with the elimination of the best fighting elements and, of course, in the first place, the Communists. But the fact that the treacherous Mike Tighe is compelled to talk even of "unity" is something which reflects the real sentiment of the steel workers, and of workers in other industries who support the rank-and-file movement in the steel industry.

VII

The conference of the expelled and suspended lodges elected an Emergency Committee fully representative of the steel workers, among whom are leading Negro steel workers. It is important to mention that a Negro delegate was the Secretary of the Convention, elected unanimously by the conference which included a number of other Negro delegates. The conference dealt with the organization of the Negro steel workers as a special problem. It also took up

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the work among the young steel workers and the building of the women's auxiliaries.

Since the conference and the convention adjourned, the National Emergency Committee has already made a number of moves for unification. As part of this fight, a delegation went to Washington and conferred with Green, Lewis, and others. The rank-and-file movement is under no illusion that the unification of the A.A. will be an easy matter to accomplish. They know that it means to win the organized steel workers, especially those lodges represented at the Tighe-controlled convention. They know that it means to extend the organization among the unorganized. And this, they know, will not be done by Mike Tighe. They are taking steps to organize the steel workers.

While our Party has made important steps forward among the steel workers, has recruited steel workers into its ranks, we must say, however, that the situation has not been utilized to the fullest extent. In some Districts of the Party there is still inadequate attention being given to the work, and especially to the building of nuclei in the steel mills, the publication of Party shop papers, etc. Also, the new workers recruited into the Party are not being educated rapidly enough. We are still slow in the building of functioning Party fractions. Likewise, the Party can certainly do much more through its general efforts, more specifically through its connections in the mass organizations, to help bring the unorganized steel workers into the A.A.

It is difficult to state exactly what the developments of the next few months will be. One thing is clear. The steel workers grow more and more dissatisfied, not only with the Tighe policies, but especially with the conditions in the mills. There can be developed important struggles. It is on the basis of the development of such struggles for the needs of the employed and unemployed steel workers that the issues will be decided, that the unity of the steel workers will be achieved, no matter what form it may take in the future. And we know that only with a strengthened Party among the steel workers, with nuclei in the most important plants, through increasing the circulation of the *Daily Worker*, through building functioning fractions, will this movement be successful in the struggle against the steel trust in defeating the Tighe machine.

Finally, it is necessary to bear in mind that this fight of the steel workers for their union, for improved conditions, is the fight of the whole labor movement. The Party must make this the fight of the whole labor movement. We must bring this fight into every local union, into every central labor union, into every convention of every State Federation, and, finally, if need be, into the coming convention of the American Federation of Labor.

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The Filipino Masses Enter the Stage of Armed Struggle for Freedom

By HARRISON GEORGE

VOLLIES of rifle fire have drowned out honied hypocrisies! The so-called "Commonwealth Government" of the Philippines is baptized in the blood of the toilers! Sixty-seven of them (the carefully censored imperialist press dispatches admit that many, though there are probably many more!) are buried—"scores of bodies wrapped in woven native matting and buried in a common grave without coffins"—a common grave, their "commonwealth"!

Thousands of Constabulary, armed to the teeth, patrolling all provinces of Central Luzon in motors. Manila police carrying rifles. All conveyances searched. Eight thousand troops of the Manila garrison prepared for war. Constabulary seizing all "private fire-arms" (evidently from stores, because the possession of firearms by the people is strictly forbidden). Hundreds (reports indicate about 800) arrested, including some members of the Legislative Assembly. Special judges assigned to give them a "fair trial". All public meetings prohibited. And—"with these precautions"—the proposed "Commonwealth" Government's constitution—"previously approved by President Roosevelt"—is "approved by the voters in a plebiscite".

But, what a plebiscite! Out of the nearly 14,000,000 population, there were only 1,700,000 voters who registered. This is not surprising, considering that all who do not own considerable property are disfranchised; a fact in itself proving the falsity of democratic pretensions. In addition, 36 hours after the polling places, "guarded" by troops, had closed, reports "from all sections", which certainly should give the voting in Manila and other big centers, gave only some 450,000 votes cast, though imperialist press dispatches hopefully estimate that a million had been. Even so, the efforts of the imperialist press dispatches to make seven per cent look like a popular expression, by inserting such things as "enthusiastic voters", are most transparent.

The heroic peasants of Bulucan, Laguna, Nueva Ecija, Tayabas

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and Rizal provinces, have—by their sacrifices—effectively exploded the sanctimonious hypocrisy of the Roosevelt-Murphy "liberal" regime, and exposed the "freedom and independence" supposedly "granted" by the Tydings-McDuffie Act, as a lie!

Because the Tydings-McDuffie Act has been sufficiently explained by the manifesto of the Communist Party of the Philippine Islands in the April issue of *The Communist*, it is not necessary here to analyze that prize piece of hypocrisy, aside from noting its direct connection with the uprising. It is necessary, first of all, to examine the conditions of the Philippine peasantry, as the background of the uprising, the real opening battle of the agrarian-anti-imperialist revolution.

The population is overwhelmingly agrarian, though the vagueness of statistics conceals just what percentage are purely peasants as distinguished from wage workers. An estimate, under the heading of "agricultural laborers", for 1927, gives a total of 2,736,175, of which 1,796,001 were males, and 940,174 females. The 1918 census (there has been none since) gave a slightly smaller total, but gives no listing of peasants as distinct from wage workers in agriculture. In 1918, there were 865,698 persons in "industrial pursuits" and 426,547 in "commerce".

I

The standard of living (or dying, better said) of the agricultural wage laborers can be seen by the wage scales in the heaviest agrarian wage labor provinces; in Cebu, which had 248,434 "agricultural laborers" in 1927, the average male wage worker received a wage of 22 cents (American money) per day. Women wage workers in the same province received 16 cents. And this was when they were fortunate enough to have a job. Now, hundreds of thousands are absolutely jobless, without any resource at all, except, in some cases, their peasant relatives.

But the condition of the small peasants has been getting worse and worse. According to the *Fortnightly News* (now not printed) of the Bureau of Plant Industry, for November, 1931, the "average cultivated area per family is but slightly over one hectare, with an average income of less than 100 pesos". (The peso is 50 cents U.S. money, making the average peasant income per family only $50 per year!) This, mind you, is the *gross* income, not deducting the expense for seed, fertilizers—if any, and numerous other things. This refers to the tenant farmers in the principal crops of rice, sugar and tobacco.

The same authority, continuing, says:

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> "In the Philippines, practically all farms, with but few laudible exceptions, are run by absentee landlords, who depend on *aparceros* (sharecroppers) or *inquilinos* (cash tenants) for cultivation of their lands. Each *aparcero* operates on the average slightly over one hectare, on shares, usually one-half of the crop, with expenses equally divided with the landlord. In the majority of cases, the *aparcero* has had little schooling or none at all." [No wonder, since there are almost no schools in the rural districts—H. G.]

And, it is added:

> "Such a system has continued under the ægis of free trade [with America] in the raising of sugar cane, abaca [hemp] and tobacco. It has been followed with rice ever since one can remember."

Our authority failed to account for this surprising monopoly in land. So we will help him out by informing the reader that, with the conquest of the Philippines by Spain over 300 years ago, the Catholic church laid hands upon gigantic tracts, the best land, the most valuable, and has been sucking the blood of the peasants ever since. Indeed, of the workers also, as most of the Manila houses sit upon church land (which is never sold, but rented to the house-builder; a neat arrangement, as he who moves must leave his house to the church!), and an Irish Catholic Archbishop lives like a king in his feudal palace within the Walled City section of Manila, one of the most closely crowded slum areas of the city, and all of it the property of the church.

II

When the proletarian, Andreas Bonifacio, organized and led the successful revolution against Spanish rule in 1896 to 1898, the battle-cry of his peasant army, raised at Balintawak (the Filipino Bunker Hill), was "Down with the thieving friars! The frair lands to the peasants!" Bonifacio was murdered by Emelio Aguinaldo, who sold out the revolution to American imperialism and allowed himself to be "captured" by General Funston. This scoundrel, still posing today as a great national hero, receives an annual bribe called a "pension" (paid from the taxes wrung out of the people) of $6,000, and was permitted also to swindle a host of peasants out of their land, by taking their Spanish deeds under promise of re-registering them when America came in, and having them re-registered—in his own name! The sanctimonious Mr. Manuel Quezon, who, like the Greeks of old, is "always ready to defend his country, or defraud it"—has similar black pages in his history.

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The basic demand of the revolution against Spain, the peasant demand for what is known as "the friars' lands", was defeated by "protestant" American imperialism. Promises were made, but never kept, and the Catholic church still sits and fattens on the life-blood of the Filipino peasantry.

As the present uprising occurred in the rice-growing areas of central Luzon, it is worth while going further into peasant conditions there. In rice, the average farm tenant works nearly two hectares of land, of which there are three grades, the first yielding 70 "cavans" per farm, the second 60, the third 50 "cavans" (one cavan is composed of 25 "gantas", each ganta being three liters). In 1931, the average yield per hectare was 28 "cavans", and the average price per cavan was 1.50 pesos. This is for the unhulled rice, called "palay".

Recall, now, that the "old Spanish custom" is that the tenant, not the landowner, must pay the taxes levied against the land! That, also, although the poor worker or peasant cannot vote, lacking enough property to qualify, each one must pay a "poll tax", known as the "cedula tax"! (American imperialism does not like to be reminded that "taxation without representation is tyranny!") And we have a fair background for revolt, right there.

But the robbery of the Filipino peasantry has no limit. In each village, there are the most outrageous usurers, big and little, the rich peasant landowner, the landlord's agent (often representing the Archbishop of Manila), the lessee of the landowner who exploits the aparceros, any one of whom, having utterly no conscience and having political pull, is the local political despot, called "the cacique" (kah-seek-kay). The cacique is a Simon Legree, a loan shark, a procurer, and a police lieutenant rolled into one. No matter what the law is, the cacique rules the village, or "barrio". Peonage is the rule, rather than the exception, and slaves, who are politely termed "servants", are beaten, occasionally beaten to death, and legally recaptured and returned to their "employer" if they run away.

III

The laws, and if not the laws, the customs, of debt, make slaves out of the sons and daughters of a peasant who dies owing a debt, or who can be claimed to owe a debt, to the cacique or rich peasant. And, as the poor aparcero or inquilino must have something to live on until the harvest, the village usurers keep them always in debt, inventing debts if there are none. The methods of these usurers are so fixed by tradition, so notorious and so hated, that the fervent

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curses of the peasants are built into song and story againt the "takipan", the "talinduwa", the "takalanan" and "pasunod".

"*Takipan*" is the pleasant habit of the usurer requiring 100 per cent interest, so that if the peasant borrows one cavan of palay, he must pay back two cavans, and, should he fail to pay this because of poor harvest, it becomes four cavans due from the next harvest. And the constabulary and local "justices" are right on hand to force collection when wanted, too.

"*Talinduwa*" requires that if the peasant borrows one cavan of palay (for food until harvest), he must pay back three cavans. "*Takalanan*" requires that if the peasant borrows either money or goods, he must pay back the debt in palay—but accept the (illegal) measurement of the usurer, which is usually from three to five "gantas" more than the official measurement. The "*pasunod*" is a forced loan, which the peasant tenant is compelled to accept in the agreement, whether he really gets any loan or not, before he can get the right to work the land at all. This "pasunod" must be paid back in palay at a lower price than the market; and is one way the landowners have of extorting extra rent from an expected good harvest. And, behind the usurer, the cacique and the landlord, stands the brutal force of imperialist rule, clothed in the garb of the constabulary.

IV

These being the conditions, if only faintly indicated, of the peasants who are "fortunate" enough to have any land to work on, how much worse it is for those who have no land and can get none, may be imagined. Manuel Quezon, in his syndicated article about the May 2 uprising, tries to fix the blame for it upon "the limitation imposed on the amount of Philippine products which may now be exported into the United States free of duty", which would and did "radically curtail the flow of trade" and "throw many men and women out of work and cause general discontent". But, already there were approximately 1,000,000 landless peasants and jobless workers in 1932, *before* the restricting acts were adopted. Likewise, though the restrictions certainly intensified the suffering of the peasants, they were already suffering, and the intensification came from the fact that the bourgeoisie and landowning classes, met with decreased profits because of the restriction of free entry of products into the U.S., took the difference out of the blood of the peasants, and retained their own previous sum of profit.

Mr. Quezon, in continuation, becomes quite wrought up about the excise tax on coconut oil and declares that: "Soon, farmers were

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unable to sell their copra [dried coconut from which oil is extracted], farm laborers lost their jobs and farm lands that were mortgaged suffered foreclosure." But, Mr. Quezon does not explain that the uprising in central Luzon came, not from the coconut-raising region, but from those peasants who grow rice exclusively. Nor did Mr. Quezon explain that he is personally interested in the oil mills and oil export into the United States, while rice is not exported at all. Nor did he reveal that he extorts the same robber terms from tenants on his own extensive rice lands, as do other landowners. Mr. Quezon is using the sacrifices of the heroic Luzon peasants to make a special plea for the Philippine bourgeoisie, of which he is a malodorous example, and a very special plea for the coconut oil industry in which he has investments. But, for all that, he makes no appeal whatever for immediate and unconditional independence.

V

The uprising of May 2 brought to world-wide notice the existence of the Sakdal organization, founded about four years ago by some of the numerous petty-bourgeois politicians without political places. It is a direct descendant of the "Tanggulan" movement, which attempted an uprising on December 10, 1931, in the famous "Tayug revolt". Most of the Tanggulan leaders in that rising and hundreds of followers were arrested, imprisoned, and forced to sign affidavits not to join any such movement. In this way was the spirit of rebellion suppressed—but not stamped out.

The Tanggulan, however, never took formal organizational shape, nor issued any literature whatever; whereas the Sakdal has long published a daily paper and attained considerable organization, though it is hard to say how much. Tanggulan, a secret organization, freely advocated armed uprising; Sakdal, legally organized, started out, like another organization with a similar program called "The Union Civica", with the pacifist precepts of Gandhism—Gandhi at that time having quite a following among the petty-bourgeois ideologists of the entire Far East.

Sakdal (from a Tagalog word meaning "appeal") started with a program of economic boycott against American goods, civil disobedience and a "peaceful general strike". Its newspaper, *Sakdal*, featured the doings of Gandhi. To attain a mass following among the peasants, its slogans were: against the "cedula" (poll) tax, against the land tax being paid by tenants, for better roads, more schools (the Filipino peasant is passionately desirous of schools for his children), and a vague demand "for better social conditions" for the workers.

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It is clear that some remnants of the suppressed Tanggulan movement went into the Sakdal, and it is likewise clear as day that both of these movements were aided by Japanese imperialism with a view to creating insurrectionary trouble for American imperialism. This, of course, in no way blurs the independent and primary character of the May 2 uprising of the Filipino peasantry, which took up arms throughout five provinces.

There is plenty of contributory evidence. The Tanggulan followers also called themselves "Ricartists", after Aretemio Ricarte, an insurrectionary leader of 1900, who refused to take the oath of allegiance to America and was exiled, taking up residence in Japan where he still is and serves as an agent of Japanese imperialism among the Filipinos. It is clear that, although Ricarte's name does not appear in the present accounts of the May 2 uprising, the Sakdal leader Benigno Ramos is in tow of Japan through Ricarte.

While Sakdal started off as a Gandhist organization, it developed a "Left wing" in the course of its growth, which accepts armed insurrection as a means of struggle. The two sources of this development lie, naturally, in the agrarian-anti-imperialist revolutionary movement of the peasantry, and the imperialist intrigue of Japan against American imperialism. The peasants of central Luzon were fighting for rice, land and freedom; while Benigno Ramos was "fighting" (from the safe retreat of a Tokio hotel) for Japanese money.

What distinction there is, at present, betwen the "Left" Sakdal and the Sakdal proper, is not clear. Although the Philippine constabulary have arrested Celerino Tiongco, editor of the Sakdal paper, Simeon Decena, Sakdal secretary, and two Sakdal members of the Legislative Assembly, this does not mean that these gentlemen had anything to do with the uprising. Their arrest, however, taken in conjunction with the barring of all Sakdal business from the mails *before* May 2, and the autocratic removal from office in the city council of Santa Rosa of the Sakdal majority, also *before* the uprising, reveal the tyrannical methods of American imperialist rule, dispel the illusion of a pacific solution of the anti-imperialist struggle, and constituted a provocation that might well have lighted the fire of insurrection.

Although the constabulary reports of the first days of the fighting definitely state that the Communists were not involved, the fact that the Party has many followers among the peasantry in the chief centers of struggle in Bulacan and Laguna provinces indicates that the young, illegal and heroic Communist Party of the Philippine Islands has taken a hand in the uprising and is receiving its baptism of fire.

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The policy of the C.P.P.I. toward the Ricartists was definitely one of rejection of Japanese "support", for an independent national revolutionary struggle for Soviets as the organs of armed insurrection and the future organ of the democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants. On this basis, the Party had worked among the rank and file and lesser leaders of the Tanggulan movement, and unquestionably its policy toward the Sakdalistas was the same. What the connection is between this program, and the fact vaguely reported from San Idelfonso, that insurrectionists held the town for five hours, "during which they declared the existence of a Philippine republic", has yet to be revealed. The dark hand of imperialist censorship and falsehood still covers the details of the whole uprising.

The national traitor, Quezon, says that it was "not a political uprising". But the fight for national independence is inextricably interwoven with the fight for the simplest economic demands, for the most elementary political rights; just as is the fight against the bourgeoisie and landlords an essential part of the struggle for national liberation.

Mr. Quezon terms the demands for abolition of the poll tax (for the poor who are not allowed a vote), and against the forcing of tenants to pay taxes on the landlord's land, as "glittering slogans". Yet these demands are perfectly possible of attainment, theoretically, even under the present bourgeois-landlord-imperialist regime. That Quezon, the head cacique of the native exploiting classes, rejects even these minor demands, shows how necessary it is that the Communist Party give great attention to these "small" demands and link them up with the struggle against American imperialism and the native exploiters. But—the policy of the C.P.P.I. is, in this respect as in others, made very clear in its Manifesto published in the April issue of *The Communist*.

VI

What needs emphasis is the policy of the C.P.U.S.A. in support of the C.P.P.I. and the Philippine people. The C.P.U.S.A. has given some help to our Philippine comrades, but not enough. In rendering this assistance, however, it is necessary that the basic Party organizations be involved; that the membership in the units, the Sections and Districts show some realization of their Bolshevik duty to the Philippines, the principal real colony of American imperialism. Especially is this essential in the Districts along the Pacific Coast, where there are big centers of Filipino immigrant workers.

The necessity for special attention and differentiated treatment

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of these Filipino immigrant workers ought to be clear. Yet even the Central Committee has failed to carry out its decision of last year to establish a Language Bureau and publication for them. And the Filipino worker who happens to join our Party is given no distinctive attention or tasks from any other, although our duty to recruit and to train such workers for work in their homeland should devolve upon our Party as a first task.

The *Western Worker* of May 13, editorially commenting on the uprising, states that Filipino immigrants return to their country with a knowledge of Marx, Lenin and Stalin. But can it truly be said that District 13 is exerting itself especially to that end? Is there any plan for such education to Filipinos who enter our Party? Or do they have to take "pot luck" with the other members? In the big center of Filipino population in Los Angeles, the Filipino Party members are very few indeed. Similarly, if we look at the Seattle District, we get little evidence that our Party is devoting itself to recruiting and training Filipino workers.

The New York District has approximately 2,500 Filipino workers. Although good work has been done in Brooklyn, it must be said that in this work Filipino comrades have not been sufficiently brought forward. The tendency has been to turn over the special Filipino tasks almost completely to white workers. Even in "little things", be it only such a matter as sending a typewriter to our comrades in the Philippines, our work must not flag. When one understands how hopefully and with what trust the comrades in the Philippines look to us in the United States, these are no longer "small matters", but big ones.

Why is our Party not sufficiently conscious of its duties toward the Filipino people? How is it possible that, neither in the *Daily Worker*, the *Western Worker*, nor the *Voice of Action*, all of which gave accounts of the Seattle conference of the Maritime Federation, there appeared any criticism of the chauvinist action of that conference to bar all Asiatics from American ships? So far as we know, San Pedro is the only port where a struggle has been waged against this, a report reaching us that the I.S.U. membership had defeated a proposal to bar Filipinos from the union as well as from the ships, though other reports tell of a strike being called to compel the Dollar Line to discharge four Chinese, from the steamer "Stanley Dollar".

It appears that having finally, and at least in the main, comprehended what white chauvinism means when applied to Negroes, our Party membership (even some of the more responsible functionaries) tend to minimize the Filipino, the Mexican, the Chinese,

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and Japanese workers in America. The discrimination practiced against them is not made the subject of special attention; the Party and the Party members do not conceive that they have a special duty toward these workers.

If our Party were not negligent in respect to its plain duty to the Filipino people, the news of the armed uprising of May 2 would have caused Party units, and Sections, here, there and everywhere, themselves to initiate action in support of the C.P.P.I., to take up collections for the C.P.P.I., to urge the whole Party into action that could be interpreted as really carrying out the alliance between the proletariat of the imperialist country and the oppressed colonial people. But, did any such thing happen, in any unit? In any Section? In any District?

I think that these question marks make a pertinent ending to this article.

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The Struggle for the United Front

(Contribution to the Discussion preceding the Seventh World Congress of the Comintern)

By C. A. HATHAWAY

I

PROFOUND changes having greatest historical significance are unmistakably under way within the working class movement. The class-collaboration theories and practices of the reformists which have held sway in the mass labor movement of the capitalist countries since 1914 are now, more and more, being rejected by the workers. The trend of thought and action among the broad masses is definitely away from class collaboration and toward the solid road of class struggle.

This fundamental shift finds its first and most elementary expression in the growing mass resistance to the capitalist offensive, and in forms of resistance (mass strikes, demonstrations, mass picketing, rejection of arbitration, etc.) which repeatedly show a complete disregard for the advice and leadership of the reformists.

The deeper and more politically mature expressions of the shift away from class collaboration are: (1) the growth of the Communist Parties and the widening of their influence; (2) the severe inner crises within the Socialist Party and other reformist organizations reflecting, if only in a back-handed manner, the tremendous mass shift away from their policies; (3) the growth of a powerful rank-and-file movement in the trade unions in opposition to the entrenched bureaucracy, for trade union unity and for policies of class struggle; (4) the increasing mass demand, expressed in all organizations, for *united action* against the capitalist offensive, against fascism and war, on the basis of class struggle. These developments, in various stages of maturity, are to be observed in all countries.

The cause for these developments is to be found basically in the fact that the prolonged capitalist crisis, accompanied by increasingly severe attacks on the workers' living standards, brought out

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conclusively the bankruptcy of the theories and practices of Social-Democracy and the trade union bureaucracy. The miserable role of German Social-Democracy in paving the way for Hitler's rise to power with their "lesser evil" theory (acceptance of lower living standards, support for Hindenburg, Bruening, etc.), in the name of saving a democracy which was daily being transformed into fascism —*and with their help!* marked a turning point. This betrayal marked the beginning of the crisis in the ranks of reformism. It marked the beginning of *mass* disillusionment with the theories of class collaboration. The similar collapse of Austrian Social-Democracy a few months later accelerated the inner party crisis and the turn of the workers toward class struggle and toward united action with the Communists.

Though the capitalist crisis, the crisis policies of the bourgeoisie, the failures of social reformism, plus successful socialist construction in the U.S.S.R., are decisive factors behind the Leftward swing of the workers, it was the leadership of the Communist International which provided the workers, including the reformist workers, with those policies that are bringing them consciously onto the road of *united class struggle* against the bourgeoisie. The manifesto of the Executive Committee of the Communist International of March 18, 1933, marked the beginning of a renewed drive under the conditions of the rise of fascism in Germany for the setting up of a proletarian united front on the basis of class struggle policies. Class struggle as against class collaboration was made a central issue in this proposal for a world-wide united front of labor against hunger and the capitalist offensive.

> "The main obstacle," declared the manifesto, "to the formation of the united front of struggle of the Communist and Social-Democratic workers was and is the policy conducted by the Social-Democratic Parties, who have exposed the international proletariat to the blows of the class enemies.
>
> "This policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, known as the so-called policy of 'lesser evil', has led, in practice, to the triumph of fascist reaction in Germany."

After thus fixing the responsibility for the disunity in the workers' ranks and for the advance of fascism on Social-Democratic policies, the manifesto called upon all Communist Parties "to make yet another attempt to set up the united front of struggle with the Social-Democratic workers through the medium of the Social-Democratic Parties". It further declared:

> "The E.C.C.I. makes this attempt in the firm conviction that the united front of the working class *on the basis of class struggle*

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> will be able to repel the offensive of capital and fascism, and to accelerate to an extraordinary degree the inevitable end of all capitalist exploitation."

Aside from its reiteration of class struggle as opposed to class collaboration as the basis for a successful united struggle against capital, this manifesto was chiefly significant in that it marked the beginning of a new attempt to achieve the united front *"through the medium of the Social-Democratic Parties"*. Throughout its history the Communist movement continued its efforts to re-unite the workers' ranks, to overcome the disastrous split caused by the reformist leaders of the Second International when they joined their own bourgeoisie at the outbreak of the World War in 1914. But always, as now, Communist proposals for unity were for unity on the basis of *class struggle*. In the spring of 1922 direct negotiations were carried through between the Communist and Socialist Internationals in an effort to reach an agreement for united action. At later times, whenever the situation seemed to offer the possibility of success, proposals for united action were made and negotiations carried on with Social-Democratic or reformist trade union leaders. The most outstanding of the later efforts were the relations established with the leaders of the British Trade Union Congress in an effort to further international working class unity (1924-25). In all these cases the reformist leaders sabotaged or openly rejected proposals for united class struggle and continued their policies of collaboration with the bourgeoisie. This was a period when Social-Democratic leaders in dozens of countries accepted portfolios in bourgeois cabinets, aiding capital in its post-War rationalization drive against the workers.

Though checked in its efforts to achieve unity, the Comintern continued the fight for unity. After the failure of the 1922 negotiations, the Fourth Congress of the Communist International (Nov.-Dec., 1922) declared: "The struggle for the united front is only beginning, and it will no doubt occupy *a whole period* in the international labor movement." Again, in 1928, at the Sixth Congress, the Communist International wrote the following into its basic program adopted at that time:

> "United front tactics occupy an important place in the tactics of the Communist Party throughout *the whole pre-revolutionary period* as a means toward achieving success in the struggle against capital, toward the class mobilization of the masses and the exposure and isolation of the reformist leaders."

The problem always was placed as one of *winning the masses* for class struggle as the only means of achieving success in their

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immediate struggles and as the road to ultimate victory over the bourgeoisie. When the work among the masses from below could be supplemented by direct appeals to the Social-Democratic Parties and through negotiations with their leaders, that method was adopted. When such avenues to the masses were closed by the reformist leadership, the Communist Parties continued to appeal to the Social-Democratic workers and to the workers in the reformist unions, carrying through the organization of the United Front *from below*, directly with the workers, over the heads of their leaders. The history of the Communist struggle for the United Front is one of utilizing every possibility, at one time a united front "from below", at other times "from above and below", but always there was the one objective: *unite the workers on the basis of class struggle; defeat class collaboration; isolate the leaders who stand in the way of united action.* That remains the objective today. That is the only way, in the words of the March, 1933, manifesto, the workers "will be able to repel the offensive of capital and fascism, and accelerate to an extraordinary degree the inevitable end of all capitalist exploitation".

With the rise of fascist dictatorships to power in Germany and Austria, and the threat of fascism in other capitalist countries, the Social-Democratic Parties and reformist unions who had themselves furthered the advance of fascism, began to share the crushing blows which fascism directed against the working class as a whole, but directed in the main against the C.P. The abettors of fascism of yesterday became, at least in speeches, the opponents of fascism. Some truly broke with their past, taking up the struggle against fascism; others capitulated completely, going over into the fascist camp. The Comintern, in its March, 1933, appeal, was quick to note these changes. It proposed that those who spoke against fascism show by their deeds their opposition to fascism. It proposed united struggle for the immediate needs of the workers, warning that: "*Without a concrete program of action against the bourgeoisie, any agreement between parties would be directed against the interest of the working class*". The E.C.C.I. then concretly proposed:

> "(a) The Communists and Social-Democrats commence at once to organize and carry out defensive action against the attacks of fascism and reaction on the political, trade union, cooperative and other workers' organizations, on the workers' press, on the freedom of meetings, demonstrations and strikes. They shall organize common defense against the armed attacks of the fascist bands by carrying out mass protests, street demonstrations and political mass strikes. They shall proceed to organize committees of action in the workshops and factories, the Labor Exchanges and the workers' quarters, as well as organize self-defense groups.

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"(b) Communists and Social-Democrats shall commence at once to organize the protest of the workers with the aid of meetings, demonstrations, and strikes against any wage reductions, against worsening of working conditions, against attacks on social insurance, against the cutting down of unemployment benefits, against dismissals from the factories.

"(c) In the adoption and practical carrying out of these two conditions, the E.C.C.I. considers it possible to recommend the Communist Parties during the time of common fight against capital and fascism to refrain from making attacks on Social-Democratic organizations. The most ruthless fight must be conducted against all those who violate the conditions of the agreement in carrying out the united front, as against strike breakers who disrupt the united front of the workers.

"These conditions which are put forward for acceptance by the L.S.I. apply also to those parties which, like the Independent Labor Party for example, have proposed to the Comintern the organization of the united front of struggle.

"The E.C.C.I., which makes these proposals before the international working class, calls upon all Communist Parties, and in the first place upon the Communist Party of Germany, immediately and without waiting for the results of negotiations and agreements with the Social-Democracy with regard to a common fight, to proceed to organize joint fighting committees with Social-Democratic workers and with workers of all other persuasions."

These proposals of the E.C.C.I. are clear and require no explanation, except possibly point "c". The Comintern, quite in accord with the fundamentals of working class democracy, had always contended that the interests of the working class required that "the Communists must unconditionally retain the right and the possibility of expressing their opinions on the policies of all organizations of the working class without exception, not only *before* and *after* the action, but also, when necessary, *during the action* as well. . . . In supporting the slogan of the greatest possible unity of all workers' organizations in every *practical action against the capitalist front*, the Communists can in no case renounce the exposition of their views which alone are the logical expression of the defense of the interests of the working class as a whole." (First thesis of the E.C.C.I. on the united front, adopted December, 1921.)

Plainly, the formulation in the above-quoted March, 1933, manifesto represents a tactical concession to make easier the winning of the Social-Democratic workers. The latter half of the thesis formulation—"the Communists can in no sense renounce the exposition of their views which alone are the logical expression of the defense of the interests of the working class as a whole"—of course, *is in no sense impaired*. The first half of the new statement contains the concession: "The E.C.C.I. considers its possible to recommend the

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Communist Parties *during the time of common fight against capital and fascism* to refrain from making attacks on Social-Democratic organizations." This is clearly a *concession* to the prejudices which had been created by the reformist leaders among Social-Democratic workers; it was an effort to facilitate the realization of the united front with the Social-Democratic workers in the face of the fascist advance, and despite the sabotaging maneuvers of the Social-Democratic leaders.

Social-Democratic leaders told the workers: "We can't make a United Front with the Communists; listen to their attacks on our policies." This hampered the realization of united action, which the Comintern was determined to overcome. The Comintern answered: "You say we attack you. All right, *you agree to active mass struggle jointly with us* in defense of the workers' living standards, their civil rights, their organizations; agree to joint mass protests, to street demonstrations, to mass political strikes, to the organization of joint self-defense groups—and *then* we will refrain from making attacks on you."

This served to convince Social-Democratic workers of our sincerity; it made the maneuvers of their leaders more difficult. It was an important *tactical concession* which did not weaken, but strengthened the position of the Communist Parties. It made possible the speediest realization of a united front with all honest anti-fascists among the Social-Democratic followers, *while at the same time laying the basis for a still more complete exposure of those who sabotaged united action.* This was thoroughly provided for in the formulation: "The most ruthless fight must be conducted against all those who violate the conditions of the agreement in carrying out the united front, as against strike-breakers who disrupt the united front of the workers."

This was clearly no concession to *reformist policies*, to the policies of class collaboration. On the contrary, the E.C.C.I. specifically outlined a policy of *class struggle*, stating both the central issues and the forms of mass struggle—issues and forms of struggle which conformed to the experiences of the Social-Democratic workers—as the *prerequisite* for the proposal to "refrain from making attacks". This was clearly no concession on principle; it could only expedite the winning of the Social-Democratic workers, and simultaneously, the exposure of the Social-Democratic leaders. Therein lies the significance of the March, 1933, manifesto.

As stated earlier, it is the leadership of the Communist International in the struggle for the united front, given at every stage of the struggle from 1919 until the present, which has contributed most to the winning of the workers long under reformist influence,

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and to the advancement of these workers onto the road of conscious class struggle. The manifesto of March, 1933, was one of the most significant documents in this respect. It gave new impetus to the struggle against class-collaboration theories and practices and against a leadership in the workers' ranks that adhered to such theories and practices. It contributed much toward the realization of the historical task of the Communists: *the winning of the majority of the working class for the conquest of political power, for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, for the setting up of proletarian dictatorship, for the building of Socialism.*

The period since March, 1933, has been a period of marked progress in the realization of *united action on the basis of class struggle.* The Communist International itself and the various Communist Parties have energetically and, on the whole, skillfully, pushed forward at all opportunities proposals for united action. Representatives of the E.C.C.I. have appeared before the Executive of the Labor and Socialist International to appeal for united action against war and fascism, and for the workers' immediate needs. These appeals have been rejected, *significantly by the votes of the representatives of those Social-Democratic Parties which are either now participating in bourgeois cabinets or are hoping to participate in the immediate future.* However, even the L.S.I. was compelled to bow to the growing mass demand for united action. While refusing an agreement for *international* united action, it found it necessary to recognize the right of its affiliated Parties to enter into united front agreements with the Communist Parties where they deemed such action necessary or advisable. This was done only when a number of parties affiliated to the L.S.I. had found it impossible longer to resist the mass demand of their members and sympathizers for united action with the Communists.

As a result of the still limited successes in the achievement of the united front, it is already possible to say: *in France, Austria, Spain, England, Italy*—in every country where substantial beginnings have been made in the realization of the united working class action on class struggle principles—immediate successes have been obtained in resisting the offensive of capital, the anti-fascist and anti-war fight is gaining strength, the masses are being drawn together *as a class* for more powerful class battles in the future, class collaboration theories (theories of the "lesser evil") are being broken down, and the compromising, reformist leaders are being exposed and isolated.

In France, where the united working class front is most advanced, there is more than merely the pact between the Communist and Socialist Parties. The united front is a reality both "from be-

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low", that is, directly with the masses, and "from above", with the Socialist Party as such. In fact it was the successful realization of the united front "from below" through the setting up of local committees of action and the carrying through of numerous joint local actions by Communist, Socialist, and non-Party workers that broke down the open resistance of the top leadership of the French S.P. and caused them to accept the unity pact. It is the further extension of the united front "from below", which is developing at a rapid rate, that alone serves to guarantee the continuation of the two-party pact.

The struggle for unity in France has also penetrated deeply into the trade unions, with the workers of the reformist unions pressing their leaders most firmly toward unity, and even brushing aside leaders in some instances who stand in the way. Among the railwaymen, for example, the separate locals of reformist and revolutionary unions are combining locally into "unity locals", gaining not only the added strength of one combined local, but, through the unification, finding themselves able to recruit many new members who formerly belonged to neither union. The united action achieved in France in the workers' ranks has likewise increased the power of attraction of the workers' movement among the peasants, the intellectuals, the small business people, the professionals, etc. There one can see the working out in practice of the united front of action, as the most effective force in blocking the road toward fascism. The way has been opened up for the setting up of a people's front against fascism and war.

These developments—the growing unity in France, the joint actions in England with the Independent Labor Party, the joint revolutionary battles of Communists and Socialists against reaction in Spain, the unity pact with the revolutionary Socialists in Austria, and beginnings in many other nations—are the evidence of the correctness of Comintern policies. They are the outstanding examples of the beating down of class collaboration policies and the winning of the broad masses for class struggle.

* * * * *

[The concluding part of the article, dealing with the struggle for the united front in the United States, will be published in the July issue of *The Communist*.]

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Approaching the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International

DISCUSSION OUTLINE FOR COMMUNIST PARTY UNITS

(*Prepared for the Agit-Prop Commission, Central Committee, Communist Party, U.S.A., by* ALEX BITTELMAN.)

I. THE MAIN TASK OF THE SEVENTH CONGRESS AND THE WAY TO PREPARE FOR IT

1. The Seventh Congress of the Communist International will be "a Congress of struggle for the fighting unity of the working class". The chief point on its agenda is the organization of the united front of the workers and all toilers for the struggle against the capitalist offensive, against fascism and the danger of war.

2. The preparation for the Seventh Congress, as outlined in the Central Committee statement (December 8, 1934), calls for "a systematic campaign in the Party and among the broadest mass of workers and toilers." Especially must we draw into this campaign the membership of the A. F. of L. and other unions, members of the Socialist Party, Young People's Socialist League, Farmer-Labor Party, farmer organizations and members of non-Party mass organizations generally. The campaign of preparation consists in discussion of the chief task confronting the working class, as formulated by the agenda of the Seventh Congress, and in mass mobilization for struggle. "The basic link in the real mass preparation for the Congress must be the intensification of the struggle for the united front of all toilers against fascism and the danger of war."

II. OUR EXPERIENCES SINCE THE SIXTH CONGRESS OF THE COMINTERN

1. General World Situation: In 1928, at the time of the Sixth Congress, Social-Democracy and the reformist trade-union bureaucracy were foretelling a period of long life for capitalist stabilization and prosperity. They were feeding the masses with promises of "industrial democracy", high wages, a "new" capitalism which would make everybody a capitalist (like Huey Long's promises to make everybody a king). They ridiculed the idea of class struggle and advocated class collaboration. The Socialist Party was promising the masses a "democratic", a "peaceful" way to Socialism.

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As against these reformist illusions and deceptions, the Communists took the position that it is precisely from capitalist stabilization itself, "from the fact that output is increasing, that commerce is growing . . . while the world market and the limits of this market and the spheres of influence of various imperialist groups remain more or less stable, it is precisely from this that the most profound, the most acute crisis of world capitalism will arise, pregnant with new wars and threatening the existence of any stabilization." This was the prognosis made by Stalin in 1927, at the Fifteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. One year after, the Sixth Congress of the Comintern already indicated the coming breakdown of capitalist stabilization, the perspective of a revolutionary upsurge, and a "new period of imperialist wars and wars against the U.S.S.R., and of national emancipation wars against imperialism, and gigantic class battles".

This prognosis of the Communist International has been completely confirmed by history while the hopes and prophesies of the Socialist Parties and trade-union reformists lie shattered in the dust.

In the United States we had a special variety of reformism, the theory of "American exceptionalism". This was the bourgeois theory that the laws of capitalist development do not apply to America; that while the rest of the capitalist world may be drifting into crisis and class struggle, the United States was headed for "permanent prosperity" and class peace. Under the guidance of Stalin and of the Comintern, the Communist Party of the U.S. sharply challenged this bourgeois theory, which was advocated within the Communist Party by Lovestone and also by the Trotskyists, and fought for the correct Marxist-Leninist position, namely: the laws of capitalist development apply fully to the United States, that this fact is at the basis of proletarian internationalism and Communist Party strategy even though American capitalism has certain peculiarities of its own which the Communist Party takes into account in the struggle for winning the masses to its banners.

Everything that has happened in the United States since the Sixth Congress—the world economic crisis and the "special kind" of depression into which it entered in 1933, the agrarian crisis, the unemployment, the terrific fall in the living standards of the masses, the mass radicalization and sharpening of the class struggle—all of this testifies to the correctness of the position of the Communist Party of the U.S. and the falsity and bourgeois nature of all theories of American exceptionalism.

Reviewing the world situation we can say:

> "The *basic* feature characterizing the dynamics of development in the period since the Sixth Congress of the Comintern is the collapse

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> of capitalist stabilization, the maturing of the *revolutionary* crisis, though this has taken place unevenly in the various countries and has not proceeded along a uniform line in each country. Along with the growth of the revolutionary crisis and in close connection with it, and also as the reply of the bourgeoisie to this, there has arisen a new wave af fascism, while the war danger has grown far more intense." (*C.I.* Magazine, No. 24, 1934.)

2. Check up of Policy and Tactics: The December statement of the Central Committee urged every Party organization "to check up the policy of the Party, its tactics and slogans, from the point of view of the penetration of the Party's influence among the toiling masses and primarily among the working class; also from the point of view of the organizational consolidation of this influence, the political growth and training of Party cadres, and the ability of the Party to organize and lead the struggle for the defense of the interests and rights of the workers and toilers".

Each Party unit must examine the general Party activity *and its own work* from this angle.

The January (1935) meeting of the Central Committee, which initiated such a verification of our work, reached the understanding that:

> "The influence of the C.P. grew, its work has improved, the Party organizations have been strengthened, but the Party did not yet overcome serious shortcomings in the trade-union work, in its participation in the strike movement, in the work of the lower Party organizations among the broad masses of workers and toilers.
>
> "All this in its entirety very strongly emphasizes the necessity of organizationally and politically strengthening the Party in every possible way, of overcoming the weaknesses of its work, of recruiting new workers into its ranks, of overcoming the excessive fluctuation, of increasing and improving the Party press, of developing a wide propaganda of the tactics and program of the Party, of strengthening of its independent leading role in all the struggles of the working class and all the toilers of the U.S.A."

This was the evaluation of the Party and its work, given by the January meeting of the Central Committee. The discussion of the Party units will achieve the best results if carried on along the same lines, at the same time taking note of all the progress made since.

As to the political situation in the contrary, the January meeting of the Central Committee reached the conclusion that:

> ". . . there is a Leftward swing of the working class and an upsurge of a mass strike movement—with the still weak development of the class consciousness and organization of the masses—the growth of the workers' organizations, especially the A. F. of L. unions, the strengthening of the desire of the masses for the united front and

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> for a big consolidation of their ranks, the growth of sentiments in favor of a mass Labor Party, with the simultaneous increase in the activity of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois elements towards the formation of a third bourgeois party and increased activity of social reformism."

Basing itself upon the above analysis of the political situation and the strength of our Party, the January meeting of the Central Committee proceeded to verify the Party's work and to formulate its tasks "on three most important questions—the trade-union question, the united front and the question of the possible formation of a mass Labor Party".

The present unit discussions on the Seventh Congress should proceed along these lines, concentrating on examining "the work of the lower Party organizations among the broad masses of workers and toilers". This means the unit and Section and, in the first place, *the shop unit.*

The unit discussion must seek to answer the following main question:

How are we fighting and working to raise "the ability of the Party to organize and lead the struggle for the defense of the workers and toilers?"

This general question resolves itself into a number of specific practical questions, such as:

(a) What progress can be registered in making the shop of the basic industries the center of our work and in raising the political activity and initiative of the units?

(b) How do we bring to the masses (each unit in its field of work) the Party's slogans on such basic lines of struggle as the fight against the N.R.A., the capitalist offensive and fascization; the struggle against the war danger and for the defense of the Soviet Union; the fight for the united front and trade-union unity; the struggle for trade-union organization and against company unionism; the promotion of the campaign for an anti-capitalist mass Labor Party based upon the trade unions; the struggle for Negro rights; the propaganda for the revolutionary way out and for a Soviet America.

(c) What progress have we made in overcoming our shortcomings in trade-union work and in our participation in the strike movement? *This is a basic line of examination.* It requires that the units check up on the trade-union work of their members and on the functioning of Party fractions in the unions. It requires further an examination of the role of the shop unit in the preparation and organization of strike movements in its respective shop and territory. And it calls for an examination of the growth of our ability to politicalize

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the strike movements, of linking up the partial strike demands with the higher political slogans of the Party.

(d) How are we promoting the struggle for an anti-capitalist mass Labor Party and how are we combatting the increased activity of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois elements for the formation of a third bourgeois party? Are our units, in their respective fields of work, bringing forward these issues before the masses systematically (in the shops, in the unions and other mass organizations)? Do they link these issues properly with the strike movements, with the struggle of the unemployed for immediate relief and for H. R. 2827, with the farmers' daily struggles, with the struggle for Negro rights, etc.? Are our units and Sections sufficiently alive to the need of organizational steps for Labor Party formations that are maturing (unevenly) in various localities?

(e) How are we prosecuting the advance of the united front? Concretely, what efforts and measures are the units adopting towards building up united front actions and formations in their shops and territories? What organizations of trade unions, Socialist Party, farmers' organizations, unemployed organizations, etc., are our units *systematically* working with and upon (in their respective fields) to crystallize united front actions? To what extent are we learning to combat the increased activity and maneuvering of the reformists, and to combat them *on the basis of the united front* and on the basis of the experiences of the masses themselves derived from the united front? How are we fighting for our chief slogan, Soviet Power?

(f) Has recruiting of new members been improved and excessive fluctuation reduced? Is recruiting becoming in each Party unit an inseparable part of its daily mass work? Are we paying sufficient attention to recruiting such basic sections as the working youth, the advanced elements in the unions and basic shops, etc.?

(g) What progress are we making in the training and development of Party cadres: unit and Section functionaries? What growth in numbers and quality can we record?

(h) Are we learning to make better use of the *Daily Worker* in our daily mass work? And of Party literature generally?

(i) What is the situation with respect to Party education? What and how are we developing by way of unit classes, circles and other educational facilities to provide for every Party member *a minimum of political education* and systematic training in the theory of Marxism-Leninism? What are the immediate needs from the point of view of establishing *a system* of primary and secondary Party education?

(j) What improvements are we effecting in our Negro work,

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in the mass mobilization to struggle for Negro rights, in the penetration of Negro mass organizations, in the development of the united front in the Negro work? What progress can we record in our anti-imperialist work, especially in support of the Chinese and Cuban revolutions?

These are the questions that the units must discuss, politically and organizationally, and on the basis of their own experiences, in order to engage most profitably in the preparations for the Seventh World Congress.

III. THE STRUGGLE AGAINST FASCISM AND THE UNITED FRONT

The December statement of the Central Committee, which gives the main outlines for the preparation of the Seventh Congress discussion, says:

> "While concretely analyzing the strength of the fascist movements and formations, and the fascization of the rule of the American bourgeoisie through the N.R.A., while analyzing the fascist methods of work and demagogy, the Party organizations should discuss the question of how best to organize the struggle against fascism and fascization in accordance with the concrete conditions and from the point of view of building up the widest anti-fascist front of the toiling masses."

1. Fascization (and war preparations) is the basic policy of the American monopolistic bourgeoisie. This process of fascization is carried through on a variety of fronts, by means of various channels and methods. We have *masked* fascization through the N.R.A. and the whole New Deal of the Roosevelt administration which systematically curtails the democratic rights of the masses, seeks to paralyze the labor movement, and builds the capitalist government (the State) into a concentrated fist to accelerate the capitalist offensive and to prepare for war. This is not fascism yet, but it is *the road* to fascism. Therefore, the struggle against the menace of fascism in the United States demands a daily struggle against this process of fascization, against the N.R.A. and the New Deal.

The top reformist leadership of the A. F. of L. (Green, Lewis and Co.) are supporters of the N.R.A. and the New Deal. The Right wing of the Socialist Party, the "Old Guard" (Oneal, Waldman, Dubinsky, etc.), occupy the same position. They are therefore active participants in the fascization of the rule of the American bourgeoisie through the N.R.A. In calling for "a bigger and stronger N.R.A.", these reformists are calling for more and quicker fascization. This is the meaning of the political demonstration which they organized for May 23 in New York and which they plan

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to extend to the rest of the country. This is how they are paving the road for fascism in the United States.

Norman Thomas still clings to his old position that the N.R.A. is free from the politics of fascism. This absolves the N.R.A. from being a channel of fascization of the rule of the American bourgeoisie and has the effect of weakening the struggle against the N.R.A. and fascization in the United States. Thomas' position is grist to the mill of the "Old Guard" and of the A. F. of L. reactionaries who are openly working for "a bigger and stronger N.R.A." and, hence, for fascization.

But growing numbers of the membership of the unions and of the local functionaries, and the majority of the membership of the Socialist Party, recognize (though not always clearly) the role of fascization of the N.R.A. Contrary to the position of the "Old Guard" which sees "no danger of fascism in the United States" (Algernon Lee), and which collaborates with the fascization of the New Deal, the majority of the Socialist Party membership which voted for the "Declaration of Principles", and those that follow the Revolutionary Policy Committee, does see the danger of fascism in the U.S., and is growing ever more willing to fight against the fascization policies of the New Deal. The same is true of the rank-and-file movements in the A. F. of L. This creates an ever wider base for united front action, for the building up of "the widest anti-fascist front of the toiling masses".

The unit discussions should devote themselves to analyzing these developments and to an examination of their work in the building of such an anti-fascist front.

2. The process of fascization in the U.S. appears more openly in the policies of "the extreme Right fascist and semi-fascist representatives of finance capital, the Republican Party, the Liberty League, etc." Against these we must carry on an intense campaign. And in doing so "it is necessary to show the class kinship of Roosevelt's policy with the policy of his opponents from the Right, explaining to the masses that Roosevelt with the New Deal and N.R.A. policy does not embarrass or hinder the carrying out of the policy of finance capital, of Wall Street, but, on the contrary, resorting to more skillful methods, rather makes easier the carrying out of this policy." (January Resolution of the Central Committee.)

3. Various groups of the most reactionary circles of finance capital are trying to build up a number of fascist demagogues and to establish their influence among the masses. The increased activities of Hearst, Coughlin, Long and also General Johnson are indicative of this fact. This is an attempt by the reactionary monopolies to build up fascist bulwarks against the working class and the toiling

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masses along with the masked process of fascization through the N.R.A. The Party is unfolding a campaign of exposure of these activities of the fascist demagogues. Each unit in this discussion should examine its own activities along these lines. Such, for instance, as what use is being made of the Party's literature on Hearst, Coughlin, and Long to reach the workers in the shops, in the unions, among the farmers, etc. What steps have the units taken on their own initiative, especially where these demagogues are most active, to expose their true nature and to unify the struggles of the workers against the capitalist offensive and fascism? What activities are we developing around the rallies against the fascist demagogues?

4. Company unionism, compulsory arbitration, Coughlin's schemes for "organizing" the auto workers and for "government regulation" of unions—all these are menacing features in the process of fascization in the United States. Hence the Party's slogans and policies for the struggle against company unionism and against the Wagner Bill. A major feature in the fascization policies of the American bourgeoisie is to try to prevent the development of a strong trade-union movement. This helps us to arouse the workers against fascization and fascism. This also intensifies the process of differentiation within the functionaries of the A. F. of L., the top Right wing and extreme reactionaries moving further on the path of fascization, while growing numbers of lower and even some middle functionaries are being forced to the Left, to the camp of fighters for trade unions and against company unionism, that is, against fascization. These developments, *especially the growing rank-and-file movements,* create new and wider possibilities for the organization of united actions against fascization. Each unit should examine carefully these developments, also in its own field of activity. The aim should be to promote the united front against fascization on the basis of these issues, especially in the unions and shops.

5. A vital point in the fascization process is the increasing effort of the bourgeoisie to build up the American Legion (and also other organizations of war veterans) into a reliable armed fist of the capitalist offensive, of fascism and war. Still another point of equal importance is the further extension and militarization of the C.C.C. camps by the New Deal. Only from this angle of fascization (and war preparations) can we correctly understand the latest maneuvers of all bourgeois groups with the bonus and the special measures taken by the New Deal to fascize the youth and to build up the C.C.C. The Party has stressed the vital importance of bringing to the veterans our position on the bonus (immediate payment of bonus from funds raised by taxation of large incomes and fortunes), of entrenching ourselves in the mass organizations of the ex-soldiers,

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especially the American Legion, of bringing the struggle for the bonus into the unions and farmers' organizations, of more concentrated work in the C.C.C., and of more Party support and guidance to the Y.C.L. in its work of building the united front among the youth against war and fascism. In this discussion the units should examine their work in this particular field, taking all necessary measures to strengthen their activities along the above lines.

6. The spread of national chauvinism and incitement against proletarian internationalism is a major feature of the process of fascization. We see it in the growing incitements against the Negroes; in the intensified campaigns against the foreign-born masses; in the efforts to drive a wedge between Catholics and Protestants, in the growth of anti-Semitism, etc. All these fascist movements and ideologies sail under the banner of "Americanism". The Party has indicated the line to be followed in combatting these features of fascization. We carry into the masses our banner of proletarian internationalism as the only way—the Bolshevik way—of liberation of the masses in the United States. We point out that only the Communist Party of this country has embodied the best revolutionary traditions of America and is carrying them forward, in the present epoch, under the banner of Marxism-Leninism. Above all, the way to combat the fascist rage of national chauvinism is to pursue with the utmost energy the work of organizing all workers and toilers — white and Negroes, native and foreign-born, Catholic and Protestant—into powerful fighting unions, unemployed organizations, farmers' organizations, an anti-capitalist Labor Party and, the more advanced elements, into the Communist Party, for a common struggle against the common enemy—the capitalist class.

7. We must analyze more closely the "fascist methods of work and demagogy" in the United States. With our literature on Hearst, Coughlin and Long we have made a beginning in this direction. We must now take more note of the fact that thus far the process of fascization in this country (in its open forms as well as masked) avoids attacking "ideologically" the principles of American democracy, even "champions" these principles, especially the American Constitution, *while curtailing systematically the democratic rights of the masses, especially the right to assemble, to organize and to strike.* The Liberty League parades as the best defender of the "democratic institutions" of the United States. So do Hearst, Coughlin and Long. It is clear that the forces of fascization in the U.S., at least for the present, and until the revolutionary crisis becomes more mature, prefer to sail under the banner of "democracy" and "against dictatorship", *while daily trampling under foot the democratic rights of the masses and seeking to strengthen the dictatorship of finance*

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capital. The backward masses are liable to be deceived by this "democratic" demagogy of the fascists and semi-fascists, failing to recognize their fascist character. It is, therefore, necessary to point out (a) that because of the traditions of bourgeois democracy in the U.S., fascist ideology in this country naturally abstains for a time from directly attacking these traditions, at the same time intensifying the drive of fascization to curtail the democratic rights of the masses in practice; (b) the Constitution and the "democratic" institutions of this country are of such a nature, in distinction from some of the European institutions of bourgeois democracy, that finance capital is still in a position to concentrate in the hands of the President tremendous striking force for the purposes of fascization and war preparations, the putting over of the N.R.A. being the best of the most recent examples; that the Constitutional division of government functions (legislative, executive and judiciary) also enables finance capital to use any one of these arms of government for pressure upon the other and in this way promoting fascization without the need of changing the Constitution. The "States rights" are also utilized to curtail the rights of the masses even by legislation without the need of modifying the Federal Constitution today. Some liberals, and also Norman Thomas, reach the conclusion that, as long as there is no change of the Constitution and no formal abolition of any of the "democratic" institutions provided by the Constitution, there is no fascization of the methods of rule of the American bourgeoisie. This is false. Life itself demonstrates the growing fascization of the rule of the bourgeoisie in the U.S. as outlined above. Only this fascization still takes place *largely* within the framework of the Constitution itself and under the banner of "democracy", which is explained by the special characteristics of the bourgeois democracy in the U.S., and which also confirms the Communist position that fascism grows organically out of bourgeois democracy itself. Therefore we say: "*Only the class struggle against the entire policy of the bourgeoisie can defend the interests of the masses and crush the plans of finance capital and fascism.*" (Resolution of the January Meeting of the Central Committee.)

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The Unemployment Movement in the U.S.A.

FROM MARCH SIXTH, 1930, THROUGH THE SECOND "NEW DEAL" YEAR

By HERBERT BENJAMIN

INTRODUCTORY

RECENTLY announced and soon to be inaugurated policies of the Roosevelt government are about to produce profound changes in the unemployment relief situation. These changes are bound to lead to greatly increased and much sharper struggles of the employed as well as unemployed masses.

Through its chief executive, President Roosevelt, the American ruling class has announced: "The government must and shall quit this business of relief." (January 3 message to Congress.) At the time Roosevelt made this declaration, there were 22,375,000 men, women and children on the federal relief rolls. According to Harry Hopkins, Roosevelt's relief administrator, this number included less than one-half of the unemployed and their dependents. And according to admissions from the same sources (since corroborated by reports of Mayor LaGuardia's investigating committee, and by similar reports from other cities) the "relief load" is constantly growing.

The government relief program, therefore, immediately and directly affects the very lives of at least 45 million men, women and children, or about one-third of the entire population of the United States. In addition, the details of this new program affect the wage and living standards of the entire working-class population more directly than ever before.

The relief policy of the ruling class always has been directed towards the same general aim. Whether through the Hoover or the Roosevelt administration, its object always has been to impose upon the masses the entire burden of the crisis. Differences between the relief program of Roosevelt as distinguished from the situation under Hoover are the result of the cumulative effects of the prolonged crisis and of the militant struggles against unemployment and for relief. Out of fear that the bitter discontent of the masses would be

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converted into mass revolt, the ruling class has been compelled to modify slightly its relief policy which has remained basically unchanged during the entire period of the crisis.

Due, however, to the widespread character of the crisis and the consequent mass impoverishment, even the small concessions which the ruling class has been forced to make have proved very expensive. Furthermore, by reason of the prolonged character of the crisis, concessions, which the ruling class intended and hoped would be of a most temporary character, tend instead to become institutionalized. Their carefully designated "temporary" and "emergency" relief, tends to develop into a permanent system which the masses, with ever greater insistence, demand shall take the form of an adequate federal system of genuine unemployment and social insurance.

This is the essential difference between the unemployment relief situation of the present, as distinguished from the situation which prevailed in the first years of the crisis. It is necessary to realize this difference in order to establish what has been achieved by the five years of bitter struggle against unemployment. It is equally important to realize that despite our achievements, the product of so many, such heroic and bitter struggles, mass misery remains widespread and the danger that we shall lose even the little that has been reluctantly conceded remains constantly imminent. It is in this sense that our achievements, the lessons of our past struggles and our immediate as well as general perspectives must be examined.

If we recall the conditions that prevailed during the first years of the crisis, we shall not only be able to record what has been gained *through our many struggles, but we shall also prove thereby how little* has been conceded by the ruling class in the face of the tremendous and dire need of the toiling masses. We will thus be able to visualize more clearly the kind of conditions which the ruling class seeks to impose upon the masses when it proposes to revert to the program which Roosevelt foreshadowed in his statement that "local responsibility can and must be resumed".

I. FORMATIVE PERIOD OF THE AMERICAN UNEMPLOYMENT MOVEMENT

Unlike any of the other major capitalist countries, the United States had no relief system whatever at the time the present crisis began, despite the fact that even the most conservative estimates show that at least two million workers were unemployed even in he peak years of Wall Street "prosperity". Under the influence of capitalist propaganda, even the majority of the workers believed that absolute destitution and dependency were due to individual delinquency or, at least, to individual misfortune.

The question of relief was relegated to the private "charity"

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agencies that operate on the "case work" theory. This theory is that there is nothing fundamentally wrong with our social system, but that some individuals are "somehow" unable to adjust themselves to our "perfect" social order. This means, also, that unemployment and destitution are the fault of the individual and that, therefore, having no one to blame but himself, he has no right to make demands upon the class that profits from, and the government that maintains, the capitalist system.

The so-called charity agencies in turn gladly co-operated with the government in fostering this attitude. First, because these agencies are controlled by leaders and representatives of the ruling class. Second, because they saw an opportunity to exploit the misery of the millions of unemployed for the purpose of increasing the success of their many fund raising campaigns. At the same time, however, they systematically denied relief to the unemployed, on the ground that such cases are not within the scope of their functions. The American Red Cross, for example, with millions of dollars in its coffers, refused to extend relief on the ground that it concerns itself with only such catastrophes as are the result of "an act of God"! When Hoover declared that relief is a local problem that must be met by local governmental agencies, the municipalities and counties countered with announcements that they were bankrupt and could not assume the burden of relief for the masses of the unemployed. So the buck was passed, back and forth, while millions of unemployed and their dependents suffered unrelieved starvation.

The Unemployment Councils were organized and developed during this period, under the leadership of the Communist Party. The militant spirit and tactics of the Councils, which have become the dominant characteristic of the unemployment movement, were forged and developed in conditions during which the unemployed had to face the most brutal opposition in order to establish their right to even demand relief. The workers organized in the Councils had to face large detachments of police each time they demanded food or lodging for a destitute family. As a result the Councils were engaged in constant struggles. It is worth while remembering this because the militant traditions of these struggles have an important bearing on the negative as well as the positive characteristics of the unemployment movement in this country.

Under the leadership of the Communist Party, these partial, hourly struggles were consciously directed towards a general objective,—to compel city, county, State and federal governmental bodies to recognize and assume the obligation of providing adequate and continuous relief. By 1932, considerable progress had been achieved in this direction. The right of the workers to demand relief was established. Most of the cities, particularly in those places

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where Councils were functioning, were compelled to provide and establish some kind of relief system. Even where Councils had not yet been organized, the authorities were compelled to establish relief as a "precautionary measure" out of fear that otherwise a militant unemployed movement would develop in their locality.

It is important to bear in mind that up to this time, the Communist Party alone of all the political parties in the United States concerned itself with the task of organizing, leading and developing the organizations and struggles of the unemployed. This, too, influenced the character of not only the Unemployment Councils, but of all other organizations that have since developed under Socialist and other leadership. This explains primarily why all the existing unemployed organizations now put forward essentially the same general demands. It explains also why the Councils, led by Communists, have adhered most consistently to their program.

RELIEF DURING TWO YEARS OF THE "NEW DEAL"

Just as the partial struggles around the individual cases were, under Communist leadership, developed into general city-wide struggles to force improvement of relief conditions for all the unemployed of a given city, so, too, the city-wide struggles were developed into state-wide, and finally into national, struggles to improve state-wide and national relief conditions. The many state-wide hunger marches and the two National Hunger Marches, conducted in each case around the demand for a federal system of unemployment and social insurance, served to increase tremendously the pressure for federal relief. By the time of Roosevelt's election, the ruling class was convinced that it could no longer evade the demands for some form of federal relief. This resulted in the relief program since conducted by the Roosevelt administration.

The beginning of this phase of the government's unemployment relief policy, therefore, coincides with the beginning of the Roosevelt administration. It is at this point that the negative characteristics of the unemployment movement become most pronounced. It is not surprising that this movement, which is the youngest division of the American labor movement, should have made some serious political mistakes during a period that was marked by unprecedented demagogy on the part of the ruling class and its agents.

What were our chief mistakes? First, a failure to estimate correctly the character of the concessions that the ruling class was forced to make; to recognize their inadequacy—even while recognizing them as achievements of our struggles. Second, our failure to combine the fight of the many who received no relief at all with the fight for generally higher relief standards and provisions even where some concessions had been won. Third, our inadequate efforts

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to extend, consolidate and unify our organization as a permanent, integral part of the labor movement. Let us briefly discuss these three main questions.

ROOSEVELT'S "HUMANE" RELIEF PROGRAM

When summed up and compared with conditions in the first three years of the crisis, the amount of relief we have won since then represents a relatively considerable total. In the period from May, 1933, when the federal government was first compelled to assume some responsibility for unemployment relief, to March, 1935, the ruling class was forced to expend a total of more than three billion, two hundred million dollars ($3,207,000,000 to be exact), for relief. How little relief would have been available if the federal government had not been forced to assume a share of the responsibility becomes evident from the reports which show that the share contributed by the federal government amounted to 60.6 per cent in 1933 and to 71.7 per cent in 1934.

Precisely because a continued and greater struggle is imperative in order that the federal government shall be compelled to continue to provide and improve relief, it is necessary to recognize what has thus far been won through our militant struggle. This is essential in order to encourage the masses to struggle. It is also essential in order that we may counteract the propaganda of Roosevelt's bally-hoo machine which attempts to belittle the results of organized struggle, so as to disarm the masses whose living standards it constantly attacks.

To the extent that we have failed to popularize our gains, we have left the masses a prey to the Roosevelt demagogy. But it is even a more disastrous mistake to fail to realize the total inadequacy of the relief we have won. When spokesmen of the ruling class wail that: "Relief costs $58 every second, $3,400 each minute, $208,000 each hour of the day, and averages one hundred and fifty million per month", we must realize they are trying to prove how much could be saved if relief were reduced or discontinued. But for us these figures cannot be imposing when we realize that they represent the sole means of life for 22,375,000 men, women and children. This means that even those who manage to get on relief are living on an average of $6 a month, an average of 20 cents a day for food, clothing, shelter, medical care and all the other essentials of life! Moreover it must not be forgotten that the Federal Relief Administration admits that less than half of the unemployed and their dependents are on the relief rolls.

In the semi-rural sections, where the labor movement is weak, and particularly in the South where the majority of the Negro masses live, relief, where it is given, amounts to as little as $7.09 per

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average family a month. When it is realized that families in these sections are considerably larger than elsewhere, then the full meaning of the Roosevelt hunger program, particularly as it applies to the Negro masses, can be more fully appreciated.

Yes, our struggle has served to eliminate a good many of the most obvious abuses, especially in centers where our organization is strongest. But the suffering and abuses that result from mass unemployment are so many, that what we have eliminated represents but a very minute fraction of the total.

Even now, after countless thousands of struggles, when the federal government has been forced to spend billions for relief, and when a relief system of a kind has been established, periods occur during which entire cities and states are cut off from relief. Forced labor has been instituted and is being extended. Through thousands of studied tricks, the relief authorities cheat the unemployed of even those things which are supposed to be given them on the basis of established budgets.

Although the average amount of relief given today is nominally larger, we should not forget that under the N.R.A. the cost of living has increased by leaps and bounds. We should bear in mind also that the unemployed have used up most of their clothing, household goods, and many other essentials which were left over from the time when they were working. Finally, we must not overlook the whole system of new sales and other "nuisance" taxes, by means of which the unemployed, as well as workers who still have jobs, are being taxed, ostensibly to pay for unemployment relief.

When the large sums being expended for relief are mentioned, we should also compare them to the tremendous losses which the workers have suffered in wage-cuts and wage losses. During the same period that the ruling class expended about three billion dollars for relief, the wage earners of this country lost nearly 45 billion dollars in wages and salaries!

SOME TACTICAL CONCLUSIONS FROM OUR EXPERIENCES

The gains we have made through the struggles of the past five years, and the changes that have taken place during this time in the position of the unemployed, call for certain tactical changes. It is necessary to be very careful in formulating the character of these changes. Many leaders of the unemployed, including the writer, have made serious errors when attempting to indicate in what respect our present struggle must differ from the struggles of the earlier years of the crisis.

Where, for example, we succeed in forcing the payment of rent for the unemployed by the relief authorities, this will tend in such places to reduce the number of the struggles against

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evictions. While, however, the number of these *sporadic* struggles, which were a marked feature of the earlier years, have become less frequent, we must emphasize that the struggle for adequate rent can and must actually become sharper. It is well known that even where rents are paid, the amount is both inadequate and irregular. Workers are being driven into the worst slums; are forced to move every few months, and are forced to deduct sums from their meager food allowance for the purpose of providing some form of shelter for themselves and their families.

The struggle against such conditions must, however, be better prepared both politically and organizationally. The masses must be made to feel that our organization is capable of providing effective leadership for such a struggle. We cannot rely in such cases on the spontaneous response which was an outstanding feature of the struggle against evictions, when the workers rallied in support of their threatened neighbors. Such struggles require not only a greater mobilization, but a consolidation of forces by means of improved agitation, propaganda and organization.

The mistake often made, and which even crept into some recent formulations of the writer, is to overlook the fact that this higher type of struggle is *not a substitute* for the day-to-day struggles of the type that were the principal feature of the unemployed movement in previous years. It must be developed out of and *alongside* of these more elementary forms of struggle, which are still essential because millions of workers are still in the same unrelieved condition as in the earlier years of the crisis.

The mistake most frequently made by our unemployed movement as a whole is that we fail to develop sustained struggles for our more basic demands, that we fail to put forward our own budgets (*e.g.*, local relief ordinances), as against the budgets provided by the authorities. We tend to confine ourselves merely to enforcement of the established budgets.

The effectiveness of the struggle to defend and advance relief standards is jeopardized by both the Right opportunist and "Left" sectarian errors that are frequently manifested by various divisions of the unemployed movement.

The great masses are still subject to the illusion that some easy and "painless" way can be found of solving their urgent problems. Opportunist elements tend to cater to these illusions. They confine themselves to formal organization, to the collection of dues and to so-called educational and social activities. They encourage the workers to believe that mass action is unnecessary, that the leaders can induce relief authorities to improve relief standards and eliminate abuses. In place of mass action they employ more or less friendly negotiations between unemployed leaders and relief officials, who

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are quite willing to encourage this kind of relationship because they realize that it will undermine the power of the unemployed organization.

This opportunist policy, which is most prevalent in the organizations led by the Socialists, Musteites and by capitalist politicians, defeats the possibility of securing general improvements in relief conditions and standards. At best it only provides the possibility of securing an occasional adjustment in some individual case. Eventually, even this limited advantage is forfeited. The membership is deprived of initiative, its militancy is vitiated, illusions are promoted, and its leadership becomes corrupted. Thereby the organization is left without the elements that are essential to effective mass struggle. When this takes place, the relief officials feel free to ignore even the small, partial demands and to treat the workers with open contempt.

The opposite extreme is, in the long run, equally harmful. In this case, some of the militants who naturally provide the leadership for our movement, but who likewise have little organizational and political experience, attempt to effect by means of their own militancy that which can be accomplished only by means of broad mass action. Many of these militants, having had very little organizational experience and political training, have a very limited concept of the meaning of struggle. They are unable to identify the political and organizational details of preparation, with the actual struggle. They are inclined to have little patience with the more backward workers. They find it much easier to brave police terror in order to present demands themselves than to take the less dramatic and more difficult action which is required in order to convince the more backward workers to organize and fight.

Where this attitude prevails, the Councils tend to become narrow sectarian groups, limited to the most tireless fighters. The masses, who get a distorted picture of our fighting program, are thereby alienated. The possibility of developing a broad supporting movement for demands of a more general character is neglected. Eventually even the best fighters become discouraged in this process. They fall prey to the propaganda of those who argue that "the workers are not yet hungry enough".

To a varying degree these tendencies find expression in all the unemployed organizations. They are among the chief factors that account for the fact that after nearly six years, the unemployment movement still embraces only a minute fraction of the millions who suffer from mass unemployment and who have been benefited by the effective struggles that have been waged by the militant unemployed organizations.

These serious mistakes in our methods of work and in the tac-

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tics of our struggle can be overcome only to the extent that the conscious forces within the unemployed movement are strengthened. This means that our Party must improve its political activity within the unemployed organizations and recruit more of the militant workers who are to be found in these organizations into the ranks of the Communist Party.

The Communist fractions in the unemployed organizations must help to bring about the necessary combination of militant mass struggle and systematic organizational activity. It is not wrong to make more use of the various grievance committees that can carry the usual grievances to the relief officials. On the contrary, in the present conditions this day-to-day activity is indispensable. But, we must make clear to the workers that our committees can be effective only to the extent that they are supported by a large, vigorous, militant mass organization that is ready to go into action when committees are ignored by relief officials. Also, the composition of these committees should be frequently changed so that every worker learns how to function on such committees. In this way the workers will realize that it is they, and not merely the individual leader, who are able to defend and advance their own needs and interests.

Likewise, it is self-understood that we must increase rather than reduce the number of mass struggles and demonstrations. But the workers must be convinced that these demonstrations and mass actions are initiated because such actions are the only way of getting what they need and want. If we call a demonstration each time a grievance is brought to our attention, without first trying to get what we want by other means, the workers will fall prey to the demagogic charges that we are merely looking for an excuse to demonstrate.

Let us give one example of this. In a number of instances, relief authorities have decreed that grievances can only be brought to certain special offices that have been set up for this purpose. Our Councils quite correctly opposed this arrangement which intended to create more red tape, more difficulty in securing adjustment, and to eliminate some of the possibilities for local struggles. But after these offices had been established, our Councils made the mistake of ignoring them. They insisted on action by the local relief office. After a time, the workers, who had grievances that were urgent, insisted that efforts be made to secure adjustment at the offices set up for this purpose. They were in sympathy with our opposition to the decree of the relief officials, but they quite naturally took the position that their first concern was to get the quickest possible action on their grievances. When our Councils failed to adjust their tactics, they became isolated from the workers who wanted action on their immediate needs.

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Manifestly, this policy was incorrect. The way to expose such schemes and organize the struggle against them, under these circumstances, is to attempt to make use of such institutions. In this way the fight around the immediate needs of the workers is combined with the continued fight against the given institution.

When relief authorities decree that grievance committees must be limited to a certain number we must undertake to get all we can through such committees, while at the same time mobilizing the masses to force the granting of those concessions that cannot be gained by small committees.

Likewise, we cannot permit organizational looseness simply because opportunists concern themselves only with formal organizational questions. This looseness is a hangover from the earlier period of the unemployed movement, when unemployment was regarded as a temporary condition. Workers who suffered from this illusion are rapidly realizing that unemployment is a permanent condition. Just as they are coming to realize the inadequacy of "temporary" and "emergency" relief, so too, they realize the inadequacy of temporary and emergency forms of organizations. They want a permanent, efficient organization that can deal effectively with the multitude of problems that face the victims of mass unemployment. They are beginning to realize that the unemployment movement must become a permanent, integral part of the labor movement in the United States.

All this requires careful attention to the constant improvement of the inner life as a condition for the improved political activity of the organization. Meetings must take place regularly and must be made interesting, instructive and attractive. The proper officers and committees must be elected. Dues payments must be regularized. Social and educational activities must be carefully prepared and conducted.

Of paramount importance is the political, educational activity of the unemployment movement. It is true that out of their daily struggles the unemployed gain many elementary political lessons. More directly and immediately than the workers in the trade unions, the organized unemployed come in direct conflict with the governmental power of the ruling class. Whereas workers on strike are apt to look upon the government as a "third party", because it intervenes in the guise of a mediator, the unemployed are always compelled to fight directly against the government agencies for their every need. On the other hand the unemployed are more likely to overlook the role of the employing class as their main enemy. They are prone to blame some individual official for their condition, rather than the political system. They are, therefore, more susceptible to the fascist demagogy of the Coughlins, Longs, etc. Unless

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afforded systematic political education, the unemployed can be confused, and their organizations can be disrupted more easily than the trade unions with their greater experience.

As to social activities, these, too, must be provided by the unemployed organizations. Poverty deprives the unemployed of the opportunity to engage in "normal" social activities. To the extent that we develop an independent program of such activity, we shall help fill a real need. This in turn will serve to stabilize and extend the membership of the organization.

We have gone into considerable detail in outlining some of the lessons to be derived from our experiences, because we are facing a period of renewed and sharpened struggle against unemployment. If we are successfully to resist and defeat the new attack of the Roosevelt government upon the relief, wage and general living standards of the masses, our fighting forces must be fully mobilized, consolidated and effectively led.

II. THE NEW ROOSEVELT HUNGER PROGRAM

In line with Roosevelt's dictum to Congress: "The government must and shall quit this business of relief", preparations are going forward for (to again quote from the same message) "an orderly liquidation of present relief activities". In place of the present relief activities, the government is to substitute a program which is embodied in (1) the Works Relief Act, and (2) the "Social Security" Act.

Of these, the former has already been passed and signed. It provides an appropriation of $4,880,000,000, which is to be spent under the dictatorial direction of the President, presumably in order to provide jobs on public works projects for an estimated 3,500,000 of the workers who are now on relief.

This Relief Act contains hundreds of jokers. In addition, it directly and frankly attacks the wage and living standards of both the employed and the unemployed workers.

First and most important is the fact that this Act is intended to relieve the federal government of all responsibility as far as unemployment relief is concerned. Through this Act the government declares that it will assume responsibility only to the extent that it can provide jobs on work projects for some of the unemployed. The amount of the appropriation and the work program outlined can provide work for 3,500,000 at most, of those who are now on the relief rolls. This means that the remaining twelve million unemployed and their dependents are to be put in the category of "unemployables". It is with reference to these that Roosevelt has declared, as Hoover did before him, that "local responsibility can and must be resumed". In other words, they are to be left de-

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pendent upon the tender mercy of the virtually bankrupt states and municipalities.

Second, the very first and most certain "project" that will be developed under this Act is the extension of the Civilian Conservation Corps. The number of these frankly militaristic C.C.C. camps is to be doubled (from the present 1,468 to 2,916), and the number of youths forced into these camps likewise will be doubled. This means that 600,000 youths are to be recruited through the camps for the rapidly approaching imperialist war. A total of $600,000,000 of the funds appropriated by this Act are to go for this purpose.

Other allocations of funds indicate the nature of the work that will be provided and some of the purposes for which these funds will be devoted. Eight hundred million will go for highways, roads, streets and gradecrossings. The last represents a gift to the railroads, which have heretofore been supposed to pay at least a part of such costs; 500 million for rural rehabilitation; 100 million for rural electrification; and 350 million for sewage disposal and the prevention of erosion. Only 450 million dollars is set aside for housing and slum clearance; and even this, according to official experts, "must wait the completion of legal, financial and engineering preliminaries".

In fact, the whole plan, while holding out illusions of immediate re-employment for three and one-half million workers, involves projects, most of which, like those cited above, will be carried out in rural sections, away from the main industrial areas that are the centers of unemployment. Furthermore, as even the *New York Times* (April 14, 1935) admits, "there is the emphasis which Secretary Ickes has put on sound and careful planning *even at the expense of delaying actual operations*". (Our italics—H.B.) When it is remembered what happened with the public works appropriation made by the previous session of Congress, which likewise depended upon the "careful planning" of Secretary of the Interior Ickes, it will readily be realized that only those features of the program that involve expenditures for war preparations will be carried out promptly; also, that most of the appropriations will go to contractors for "materials", etc. As a matter of fact, the enactment of the Bill was delayed for several weeks because the Administration was determined to defeat an amendment which would have compelled the expenditure of a minimum of 30 per cent on labor. The Administration, which states that this Act is intended to provide jobs, actually has no intention of using any more than a small fraction of the appropriation for wages. The great bulk of this money is to be used as subsidies to big trusts, and as a supplement

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to the huge appropriations already directly made for the army, navy and other war purposes.

The crowning act of the "New Deal" government is to establish, through this "Public Works Act", a "subsistence wage". Not more than $50 monthly is to be the average wage for the workers who will finally get jobs on these projects. A schedule heretofore kept secret reveals that the plan calls for wages as low as 12 cents per hour and $19.00 per month. (*Daily Worker*, April 20, 1935.) This last feature represents the most arrogant, frank and vicious attack upon the wage and living standards of the workers, that has been made by the government since the beginning of the present crisis. Even William Green has been forced to declare that he "will fight like hell" against this strike-breaking, union-wrecking program.

In passing this Act, Congress and the President revealed most clearly the hypocrisy of the "New Deal" pretensions to create re-employment, increase wages and purchasing power as the means of emerging from the crisis. It proves conclusively that the Administration's aim, like that of the Hoover government before it and of every other capitalist government, is to solve the crisis for capitalism by preserving profits despite the crisis, at the expense of the toiling population.

THE "SOCIAL SECURITY BILL"

The growing mass demand for unemployment and social insurance and the exposure of his attack upon the so-called "unemployables", is countered by Roosevelt and his spokesmen by pointing to the Wagner-Lewis-Doughton "Social Security Bill". This measure, it is claimed, will make provisions for a large number of the present unemployables (the aged, the sick and the children). Also, it is claimed, this Bill will provide compensation for those who become unemployed in the future.

It is not necessary here to make a detailed examination of this palpable fraud. The demagogic maneuvers of the Roosevelt Administration are, however, strikingly illustrated by the unfolding of the tactics that have been employed in the fight to defeat the mass demand for genuine social insurance. Prior to the opening of Congress, in his speech to the members of the "Conference on Social Security", Roosevelt declared that the time is not yet ripe for the enactment of old-age, health and other such forms of social insurance. Unemployment insurance, he said, is what Congress must enact in the coming session. His conception of unemployment insurance, as outlined in the Wagner-Lewis Bill, consists in imposing an excise tax on payrolls which will add to the tax burden of the masses and to the revenue of the federal government. *But, it will*

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not provide one cent of compensation to any one who is now or may in the future become unemployed. The federal government will merely provide $4,000,000 during the first year and $49,000,000 in succeeding years to help pay for the cost of *administration* of whatever laws (if any) are passed by the *states.*

This would be a good bargain for Roosevelt. By means of it, he would add to the revenue of the federal government (at the expense of the masses), pretend to recognize a "liberal" principle (the need for unemployment insurance), and at the same time avoid the obligation of the federal government to provide such insurance.

Since the opening of Congress, however, Roosevelt has been met by a tremendous mass clamor for social insurance. The mass demand expressed itself in two ways. First, in the mighty supporting movement for the Workers Unemployment, Old-Age and Social Insurance Bill, H. R. 2827. This mass movement, representing the greatest unity ever achieved around any single issue of vital importance to the American masses, is led by the Communist Party, which formulated and brought forward the Workers' Bill. The mass need for social insurance is also expressed through the movement developed (with the help of the capitalist press) for the utopian, and in many ways positively vicious, Townsend Plan.

The strategy developed by the Roosevelt administration has, therefore, been as follows: To bracket the Workers' Bill (which he could not openly attack because it presents an unanswerable program for social insurance, and because his attack would be a means of popularizing the measure), with the ridiculous Townsend plan. By thus subtly associating the two entirely different plans, he attempted to discredit the Workers' Bill while attacking the utopian and impractical feature of the Townsend plan. Moreover, by this means, the Administration was able to focus public attention upon the issue of old-age pensions, rather than unemployment insurance. This is of decided advantage to the Administration, in view of the fact that the so-called unemployment insurance provisions of its program cannot bear examination. It is true that the old-age pension provisions of the program will cost a few million dollars. But this is a very small price to invest in the attempt to offset the mighty movement for genuine unemployment and social insurance, which has been developed under the leadership of the Communist Party. Especially is this true, since the amount of the pension as provided by the Administration Bill is *less than the present cost of maintaining the aged in poor-houses and on home relief.* It will in no case involve for the federal government more than $15 a month for each destitute person over seventy years of age. In addition, the Bill provides so many ways of excluding even these destitute aged from

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benefits, that the government will have struck an excellent bargain indeed.

Furthermore, the Administration still has plans for eliminating any provisions that may possibly benefit anyone outside of the ruling class. As reported by the chief Washington correspondent of the *New York Times*:

> "The closest and most experienced observers in the capital are willing to guess . . . how much of the legislative cargo will be tossed overboard in the sense of Congressional emasculation . . . and how much the President will himself abandon. . . . Obviously he [Roosevelt] does not feel that it would be good strategy at this time for him to approve the abandonment of measures that face a long fight. . . . But there are ways of letting Congress know that *a gesture will be accepted instead of substance.* If this should be the outcome of consideration of social security . . . it would not occasion great surprise." (*N. Y. Times*, April 14.)

We may well conclude this description of the Roosevelt program of so-called social security and the strategy employed by this demagogue with a quotation from the same article in the *New York Times.*

> "That [a gesture instead of substance] is what Congressional leaders hope for and what many of them expect. They see the President's point of *not conceding too much publicly* by way of trimming his program, . . . *until he can be sure how much he can gain by stifling of radical legislation.* . . ." [Our emphasis throughout—H.B.]

RENEWED, UNIFIED, PERSISTENT STRUGGLE TO RESIST ROOSEVELT HUNGER PROGRAM

In the light of the foregoing, it should be clear that we are before a new wave of greatly increased and sharper struggles in the unemployment field.

The millions of unemployed who are to be designated as "unemployables" will not meekly submit to Roosevelt's *ukase* that "The government must and shall quit this business of relief". Roosevelt and the ruling class whom he serves may choose to believe that "local responsibility can and must be resumed", but they are reckoning without the host. The workers, whose resentment against the miserable relief standards of the New Deal is daily mounting, will fight bitterly against any attempt to deprive them of the relief concessions gained through five years of militant struggle. Every such attempt must and will be met by intensified militant mass struggles. These struggles will express, not only the spontaneous mass indignation of the first three years of the present crisis, but will also reflect the greater political and organizational maturity of the present un-

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employed movement. It becomes our task, therefore, to prepare, organize and conduct such struggles.

It is necessary to bear in mind that these struggles cannot be postponed for some indefinite future when the full program of the government unfolds itself. The new attack upon the masses has already begun! Tens of thousands of destitute families are already being removed from the relief rolls under the smokescreen of a campaign against "chiselers". Drastic relief cuts and cuts in wage rates on F.E.R.A. jobs are already being carried through.

Also, we must remember that even if relief will eventually be provided for some of the unemployed through the new government program, this program will disorganize and interrupt the present relief system. Relief authorities everywhere can be expected to take advantage of every opportunity for interrupting and delaying relief. Only a determined fight on our part can make certain that *"Not one family shall be left for a single day without the relief it requires"*. Doubtlessly, thousands of struggles will be necessary in order to prevent interruption of relief, between the time that a worker is taken off the present relief rolls and placed on work relief or such local relief as will be established.

In these and other struggles we must raise and keep ever in the forefront the fight for the Workers' Bill. Regardless of the action Congress has taken on this Bill, the fight conducted since the National Congress for Social Insurance has tremendously strengthened the movement behind this basic demand of the American masses. The period ahead must witness a further extension and consolidation of the movement in support of the Workers' Bill. Our ability to maintain a sustained struggle for unemployment and social insurance will have great influence on struggles in every field, and especially in the work in the A. F. of L. and our struggle for a mass anti-capitalist Labor Party. Without doubt, this issue will be paramount in the 1936 election campaign. It is by no means too early for us to begin now the preparations for the 1936 election campaign as a campaign for H.R. 2827.

FOR ONE UNITED UNEMPLOYED ORGANIZATION

Our fight for one united unemployed organization now becomes more imperative and more practicable than ever. The Unemployment Councils have already achieved considerable success in this direction. Despite the bitter opposition and the unprincipled sabotage of Musteite and certain Socialist leaders of other unemployed organizations, the rank and file of these organizations have demonstrated time and again that they share the great desire for united action and unity which prevails among the masses everywhere. The movement for unity in the unemployed field is greatly stimulated

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by recent developments in that direction within the trade unions as well as other workers' organizations. The realization that mass unemployment has become permanent, that the organization of the unemployed must become a permanent and integral part of the American labor movement, has added to the determination of the unemployed to realize such unity. The new program of the government will serve to emphasize the need for united struggle against the common enemy.

The Unemployment Councils have been developed with a view to providing the most effective possible instrument for the struggle against unemployment. The Communists in the Unemployment Councils have never taken the position that we are concerned with the interests of only those workers who are in one or another unemployed organization. The Councils, under Communist leadership, fought from the very beginning for all workers regardless of affiliation or total non-affiliation. The program and policies developed by the Communist Party, on the basis of the needs of the unemployed and our experience in the struggles, have been transmitted to Socialist-led and independent unemployed organizations as well as to the Unemployment Councils, by the Communist Party members who belong in some places to the one and in some places to the other of the several organizations. Above all, the practical example furnished by the Councils, which were the first in the field, served to influence and guide the program and activity of all the unemployed organizations.

We are in a much better position to press for unity on the unemployed field than in any other. We have the advantage of wide influence which has been achieved through a correct program and by reason of the fact that, for several years, ours was the only organization that conducted struggles in behalf of the unemployed. We have the further advantage of far larger and more widespread organization than all the other organizations combined. Despite the irresponsible boasts that have characterized the statements of Socialist and Musteite leaders of the unemployed, it is a fact that both the National Unemployed League and the Workers Alliance have units in only a few states and in fewer important industrial centers. While the Councils are by no means satisfied with their present numerical strength and therefore emphasize their weaknesses, in order that we may overcome them, it is a fact that 859 chartered units of the Councils exist in forty-two states. To these are affiliated many locals that have not yet received a formal charter, although they regard themselves as, and are in fact, units of the Unemployment Councils. Some 300,000 workers carry Council membership cards. Scores of affiliated organizations still issue their own cards. Hundreds of thousands of workers who are

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not formally members, primarily because of organizational looseness, regard the Councils and affiliated organizations as their representatives in all matters that affect unemployment conditions. They participate in actions of the Councils and are guided and influenced by the policy of the Councils. This is even true of many hundreds and perhaps thousands of members in the organizations led by the Socialists and Musteites. The leading bodies of the national, state and local Councils must often exert a great deal of persuasion to keep locals of the League and Alliance from seceding in order to join the Unemployment Council. In line with our policy we urge such locals to remain in their organization, but we guide them in the development of more effective and aggressive action for their immediate economic needs and for unity.

It should be remembered that unlike the trade unions, where the bureaucrats are strongly intrenched, leadership of the opponent unemployed organizations is relatively uninfluential and without much power. The rank and file is therefore better able to express itself and to exert pressure behind its demands for unity and for a more militant policy.

The organized unemployed recognize that theirs is an economic organization that must be open to all workers regardless of political belief and affiliation. They realize that the immediate aims of the unemployed organizations as such can and must be identical. They want to be free to benefit from the experiences of workers who fight against unemployment regardless of whether these workers belong to an organization that bears one or another name. They want to be free to select leaders from among the best fighters on the unemployed field regardless of organizational affiliation. Most of all they realize that their struggle is weakened by divisions and they resent these divisions, for which there can be no good cause. It is out of fear of this resentment that the Socialist and Musteite unemployed leaders who are committed to the splitting policy of the dominant leadership in the S.P., and to the disruptive role of the A.W.P., must make at least a pretense of concession to the demand for united action and unification of the unemployed movement.

Experience proves, however, that these leaders will continue to utilize every possible trick and maneuver to delay and prevent unity. Only the united efforts of the rank-and-file workers in all the unemployed organizations can defeat the sabotage of those who are opposed to unity, and can overcome the vacillation of even those leaders who are more responsive to the need and demand for unity.

While continuing our negotiations with the leaders of these organizations, we must, therefore, increase and intensify our efforts to reach the rank and file of these organizations. The policy of

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already now merging small and isolated locals of the Unemployment Councils with other organizations, where these are dominant, can be continued as a means of demonstrating that we are sincere in our desire to establish one united unemployed organization in every community, *whenever this will also serve to hasten the general process of unification.*

The new program of the government, which will convert 70 per cent of the five million workers who are now on relief into relief workers, serves definitely to shift the base of our activity on the unemployment field. The main center of our activity must now be transferred to the relief work projects. In view of what has been said above, it is clear that this must not be interpreted as a suggestion that we shall neglect the work in the neighborhoods.

We should carefully avoid the serious mistake made at the time the C.W.A. program was launched. The new Administration program is not to be characterized as a forced-labor program. While it is designed as an attack upon the employed and unemployed workers, the promise of work and an apparently higher income than is provided through direct relief is attractive to the workers who have been unemployed for years. We must point out the objectionable features of this program, not as a means of discouraging them from taking the job, but in order to prepare them for the struggle that must be waged in order to improve conditions on these jobs.

Our aims are: To secure jobs for all who want them with the least possible delay; to see that relief is not interrupted during the transition from direct to work relief; to influence the type of projects that are to be undertaken in the various localities (fight against war preparations under the guise of public works; for housing, for slum clearance, schools, hospitals, etc.); to enforce union wage rates, with adequate minimums for unskilled and a minimum number of hours per week and month to assure adequate income as well as protect wage rates of workers in private industry.

We must show the relief workers that these conditions as well as many smaller and local demands can be won and enforced, only if *all workers on every project are organized into a single, militant, rank-and-file controlled organization.* Our slogan is: One United Project Local on every project, regardless of craft or other organizational affiliation.

In line with the policy of the National Unemployment Council, which is attempting to form a Joint National Organizing Committee in which all existing unemployed organizations will be represented, and regardless of the action of leaders of other national organizations, Joint Organizing Committees should be formed in every com-

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munity where there is more than one organization now existing.

These Committees should include, wherever possible, representatives of the local Central Labor Body of the A. F. of L. Where admission to the A. F. of L. as a Project Local can be secured on conditions that will assure unity of all workers on the project (regardless of craft), low dues, and democratic rights, such affiliation is desirable. In any case, Project Locals should be advised to seek close contact with local Central Labor Bodies through direct or fraternal delegates.

Affiliation to the National Unemployment Council or any other national unemployed organization is not imperative. An exchange of delegates with local unemployed organizations is, however, necessary in order to provide the possibility of mutual cooperation.

Where more than one project exists in a given locality Councils composed of delegates from all Project Locals should be formed.

The relief work program is scheduled to begin on July 1. Even optimistic reports indicate that it will not get into full swing before November. Meantime, the government is already carrying through a drastic campaign to "taper off" the relief rolls. Literally millions are being cut off from all relief on one pretext or another.

These monstrous attacks must be met by the united resistance of the entire working class, the employed and the unemployed. Our experience in the struggles of the past five years points the way to the kind of struggle that must now be waged on an even broader and greater scale. The veterans of the many struggles that have been waged up to now provide the nucleus for the larger army, that must now be drawn into the struggle. The Communist Party, which was the first to initiate the struggle against unemployment and has led every important unemployment and relief struggle of the past five years, can and will provide the most capable and dependable leadership in the greater battles immediately ahead.

Since the above was written, official announcement has been made by the government that wage scales on work relief projects will start at the coolie rate of $19 per month. This announcement has aroused the masses throughout the country. A number of A. F. of L. unions and central bodies are calling a National Emergency Conference to formulate plans for a fight against these starvation wage rates. This conference, called in cooperation with the Unemployment Council, and the Rank and File Committee for Unemployment Insurance and relief, will be held in Washington, D.C., on June 22 and 23. Although called on short notice, this conference can serve to give voice to the mass resentment and provide a basis for a unified movement and struggle in behalf of the unemployed, the relief workers and the working class as a whole. The conference, therefore, deserves the widest support and attention.

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Initiating Labor Party Tickets

EXPERIENCES IN THE RECENT ELECTIONS IN SOUTHERN ILLINOIS MINING TOWNS

By RALPH SHAW

I. EXPERIENCES IN THE 1934 ELECTIONS AS A BACKGROUND OF THE 1935 CAMPAIGN

THE experiences of our Party in the recent township, village, and city elections in various mining communities of Southern Illinois show the tremendous possibilities of accelerating the development and building of a broad Labor Party. They also show the importance for the Party of carrying on a consistent election struggle as a means of giving political expression to the economic needs of the masses. An election campaign was organized by the Party in twelve mining communities with varying slates and tickets; eight of these were Workers' Tickets and the remaining two Labor Party Tickets. It is significant that well-known Communists on these tickets were elected even when the ticket as a whole was defeated.

The question arises as to how these tickets were organized, what their base was, especially that of the Labor Party, how the campaigns were conducted, what role the Party played, and how it carried on its activity in these united front elections.

The participation in the 1934 elections, township, county and congressional, formed the base which gave our comrades additional confidence and experience, and taught us how to broaden the campaign in the town and city elections. In the Montgomery County elections, we elected several Communist Village Board members and had the first election United Front with the Socialist Party and trade unions.

From our experience we found that in the struggle against the attack upon unemployed miners of Montgomery County, the Village of Taylor Springs became a Red fortress. The workers turned to the Communist Board members for advice and for leadership. In the struggle against the Criminal Syndicalism frame-up in the Hillsboro case, the Communist political intrenchment in Taylor Springs played no small part in defeating the attempt of the county and the Horner-Democratic machine to railroad the fourteen defendants

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to prison. The successful county election in 1934 on the basis of the United Front policy brought us to the next step: the extension of the United Front and the building of the Labor Party. The January Plenum of the Central Committee, which called for the building of a mass Labor Party, thus fitted into our developing situation and answered a number of problems with which we were confronted in the election campaign on the workers' tickets.

For example, in the 1934 elections in Montgomery County the united front extended to virtually all the miners' locals and women's auxiliaries of that county; but these organizations felt they were not the initiators of the ticket, and the question arose as to the relation of the unions to the Workers' Ticket. Some of the locals simply endorsed the candidates but waged no campaign, and, as a result, actually were not involved in the election struggle. This question was clearly answered by the C.C. Resolution:

> "A labor party built up from below on a trade union basis, but in conflict with the bureaucracy, putting forward a program of demands closely connected with mass struggles, strikes, etc., with the leading role played by the militant elements, including the Communists."

In line with the C.C. Resolution, we proceeded with a broad outlook on the election campaign. We examined the situation in some 25 mining towns where we have Party or mass organizations, and decided to wage election campaigns in twelve of them. At first we found the old resistance towards and hesitancy about entering the election struggle. Only by constant reiteration and concrete examples of the value of winning elections, and by the patient explanation to the Party members of the importance to the Party and the working class of having Communists in the leadership, not only of local unions, but also in towns and villages, by showing the examples of Taylor Springs, Benld, etc., where Communists have been elected, were we able to set the Party units into motion. We decided to combine the policy of building Labor Party tickets and previously established Workers' Tickets. We felt that it would certainly be wrong to call those Workers' Tickets "Labor Party" which were not based upon the trade unions. We therefore adopted the following concrete application of the C.C. Resolution:

1. To continue the Workers' Tickets in those towns where there is no trade union base and as yet not a strong enough movement from below for forming a Labor Party, but where other working-class organizations enter into a united front on the basis of a program.

2. To run C.P. tickets in several outstanding towns.

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3. To initiate a Labor Party where we have the basis in the local unions or in the Trades Assemblies.

The Sub-District Conference of the Communist Party held in January, at which the District and Central Committee representatives were present, approved the following outline on procedure of organization of the tickets:

1. The Party organization in every town to initiate the campaign, by organizing a provisional committee, through resolutions in the local unions and fraternal organizations, etc., and by calling a conference. In smaller towns, a mass meeting was to take the place of a conference. At this conference or mass meeting, candidates and program are to be chosen and the plans for the campaign to be laid down.

2. Broad election campaign committees to be set up; the campaign to be extended to every ward and precinct; house-to-house canvassing to be developed; organizations, lodges, churches to be visited and urged to support the campaign; other parties and their candidates to be challenged to debates, etc.

3. The Communist Party members on the ticket to be *known* as Communists and to speak as members of the Party. The Party also to issue independently leaflets and statements endorsing such tickets.

4. Communist Aldermen in Taylor Springs and Benld to call meetings in their wards or town and give a report to the workers on their activity.

Although conferences or mass meetings were held in the majority of the towns to initiate these tickets, juggling and "conferring" were carried on in some places. There was a tendency to form a ticket first through negotiations with individuals and *then* to come to a mass meeting or conference for endorsement. A large portion of the new membership fell into the trap of following the same steps in organizing a ticket that are taken by the old parties. In Collinsville, for example, the Party had one candidate in the non-partisan election (for assistant supervisor)—a good comrade with a leading position in the union and trades council. But, instead of calling a mass meeting or conference, our comrades simply collected names on the petition and filed it. They instructed the candidate to visit organizations, to talk to them, but the unit itself was inactive. In spite of their lack of active support he received 258 votes. An example of slowness after filing the ticket occurred in Centralia. There we had two candidates for city commissioner. The unit had no mimeograph and sent one of the candidates 150 miles to the Party center to get a platform printed. The candidate traveled by freight. On his way back he was thrown off the freight,

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arriving with his platform on election day. Nevertheless, he got 38 votes.

A glaring example of impermissible juggling with class issues took place in Zeigler, which had two local tickets—the People's and the Citizens' tickets. The latter was headed by Mayor Smith, a so-called Progressive who at one time or another gave support to the rank-and-file movement of the miners and supported the P.M.A. at the time of the strike. Our Party comrades were cocksure that they could "capture" the Citizens' Ticket, with its loose organization, by nominating our candidates at the caucus (there is no primary). When the reactionaries discovered the plan, they changed the date of the caucus, with the result that but for two militants, none but reactionaries were nominated. Faced with this situation, our comrades decided to start an independent ticket for two other offices, and again here, because of the lack of preparation and political clarity, there was a fiasco, with the result that the Party had to disassociate itself from both tickets.

II. METHOD USED IN FORMATION OF LABOR TICKET

While the organization of the Workers' Tickets proceeded by mass meeting or conference, the organization of the Labor Party tickets, in some places, took another form. In Staunton the initiative in the building of a Labor Party was taken by the Party in advancing the plan into the Trades Assembly, which comprises representatives of all the working class mass organizations of the town, including P.M.A. locals, a Women's Auxiliary, A. F. of L. locals, and the Illinois Workers Alliance. The Party forces in the Trades Council initiated a discussion of the Labor Party; a committee was elected to draft a resolution favoring a Labor Party ticket and to bring the resolution to the next meeting of the Assembly. This was done. The resolution read, in part:

> "We realize that the working class is facing many bitter struggles. In the experiences of the last five years of the capitalist crisis, we find that the workers have had to struggle for every little thing that they have gotten, whether it was a little more relief, an increase in wages, or the right to organize into a union of their own choice. And we have found that in many of these struggles, very often those representatives who were elected into office, while making many promises before elections, after gaining office clearly showed that they were on the side of the bosses and against the workers. It is time that we workers learn to protect our political interests, just as we have learned to join *unions* to protect our economic interests. This means that we workers shall draw up a program representing the interests of the workers and that we shall have the privilege to nominate and elect those people into office who come from the working class and who will fight for this program in the interests of the working class."

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Following this, candidates were selected and campaign plans were made to endorse candidates and to draw in other organizations—lodges, church bodies, etc.

In other places, like Johnstone City, for example, where a Labor Party (in name only) existed for a number of years and was under the control of reactionary Democratic and Republican politicians, it was decided to fight to win control of this ticket by entering militants on the ticket in the primaries on the basis of a real Labor Party program. A large number of candidates ran in the primary on this ticket, including three for mayor. The Party there decided to call a conference of all organizations in town for the purpose of drafting a program and selecting only those candidates who would support, and fight for, a militant program on the Labor Party ticket. About 12 organizations, including the P.M.A., responded. At this conference a member of the U. M. W. of A. was selected for endorsement as mayor and several members of the P.M.A. received the endorsement for aldermen. A program was adopted. In the primary, the majority of the candidates who were supported by the conference won. However, an outstanding weakness here was the hesitation of the Party to file candidates for the primary because the Party unit was not sure that it was Party policy to do so. The result was that Party members were not put on the ticket.

III. AGITATION, ISSUES, PROGRAMS OF THE TICKETS

Several methods were used to conduct agitation for the tickets. While it is true that more agitation material—leaflets, announcements, cards, programs—were issued than ever before, still, from the results of the election it is evident that leaflets alone are not sufficient to win an election. Only in those towns where struggles were conducted around live, current issues, where personal agitation was carried on by canvassing and systematic visiting of all organizations, did the agitation penetrate and convince. Where this was omitted or not sufficiently stressed, the vote suffered.

The importance of making organizational contacts in shown in Benld, where the ticket did not follow the general procedure of calling a conference or a mass meeting, but where all of the candidates, accompanied by a number of workers, visited various lodges and church organizations to gain support for the ticket. At these meetings the candidates explained their program. While little leaflet agitation was conducted, the personal contact with the organizations gave it the broadest base of all the tickets. Of added importance is the fact that our Party has sunk definite roots among the miners in Benld with a mine unit of 15 members, and that

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the two outstanding candidates on this Labor Ticket, two militant miners named Wyskocil and Gricevich, had carried on a militant struggle during their previous tenure as aldermen in behalf of the young workers organized in the Hod Carriers Union, as well as generally defending the interests of all the workers of Benld. These measures were in great part responsible for the victories won in the election.

The Party organization in Taylor Springs conducted the campaign along a clear-cut, revolutionary, Communist line. In addition to the statements and program of the ticket, the Party unit consistently issued independent statements clarifying and answering every issue raised. One of the best examples of a short, concise, and appealing leaflet is that issued in Taylor Springs in this election. The leaflet is six by nine inches; it contains a picture of a prison and two workers sitting in their bunks. Below the picture is the following explanation:

> "Frank Prickett and Frank Panscik are in jail. They are behind the bars not only because they dared to send a protest card to the Judge in Carlinville, but because they fought for us workers against the politicians and the relief officials. *Let's not go back on these two militant fighters of the working class. Elect them to the Village Board,* Tuesday, April 16. *They gave their freedom. Let's give them our support.*"

With two Party leaders in jail, the campaign was partially crippled. On the other hand, the Democratic county machine did its utmost to defeat the Communist members of the Village Board. They openly raised the slogan, "We are not against the others, we just want the Communists out of our Town Hall." They made the most demagogic speeches, including promises of jobs, street lights, etc., in addition to holding the usual party affairs and beer drinking contests. In spite of this, two out of three Communists were re-elected by the workers of Taylor Springs and the third one, Comrade Frank Prickett, lost by only three votes.

The most burning issues in the election campaigns were the right to organize, strike and picket, and recognition of the committees of unemployed. The demand for free speech, against coal company terror and vigilantes, appeared in most tickets, as well as the demand for the passage of the Workers' Bill, H.R. 2827. Besides these, there were numerous local demands for street lights, oiling of streets, projects, against discrimination and favoritism in division of city work, for the right to use the City Hall for workers' meetings, against appointive powers of the Mayor, and so forth.

IV. TABULATION OF THE VOTE

Benld: Labor Ticket received 766 votes or 60 per cent of

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total vote cast. Full ticket, except one alderman, was elected, and Andy Gricevich, Communist Alderman, was re-elected with 254 votes. In the Benld School Board Election, two militant workers were elected with 440 and 512 votes, defeating the previous Mayor, Lohmar.

Taylor Springs: Workers' Ticket elected four out of nine candidates, including two out of three Communist aldermen in the re-election. Three hundred and twenty-seven votes cast were equally split, the Democratic machine winning by margins of three and five votes. In the School Board election one militant worker was elected to the Board.

Virden: Workers' Ticket polled 280 votes, or 11 per cent of the total vote. In Ward Four, Workers' Ticket candidate received 33 per cent of the total vote in the ward. Straight Communist vote for G. Sultphin, for City Clerk, was 138 votes.

Johnstone City: Labor Party polled 994 votes out of 2,414 cast, or 41 per cent.

Staunton: Labor Party polled 192 votes out of 2,420 cast, the Democrats polled 1,161 and the Republicans 967.

Panama: Workers' Ticket polled 51 votes out of 300 cast.

Glen Carbon: Communist candidates in non-partisan election polled 59 and 80 votes respectively. Two militant workers (sympathizers) were elected to the Village Board with 150 votes out of 380 cast.

In the *non-partisan* elections under the Commission form of government in Marion and Centralia, our candidates polled 90 and 38 votes respectively. In Marion, the Socialist Party and the Communist Party carried on a joint campaign, and one of the candidates for Commissioner lost by only eight votes.

In the Township Elections for Highway Commissioners, Supervisors, and Constables, we had candidates in two towns, Collinsville and Panama. In Collinsville the Communist vote was 259 out of 3,751 cast, and in Panama 49 votes out of 400 cast. In both of these instances a very weak campaign was conducted.

In analyzing the campaign and the results, town by town, we find that the Workers' Ticket in Virden received more votes than the Labor Party ticket in Staunton, which had a trade union base and was supported by a united front of the Socialist and Communist Parties. How can we explain this apparent contradiction? The answer lies in the fact that the trade-union base of the Labor Party ticket in Staunton constituted a united front from the top in which the local unions below were either not involved at all, or very little. Instead of initiating the Labor Party ticket in the local unions, the resolution was passed in the Trades Assembly, and then handed

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down to the rank and file in the unions. Moreover, while in Virden the Party unit mobilized the workers and was not only the driving dynamo, but an organized detachment of the Workers' Ticket, on the other hand there was capitulation in Staunton to Right opportunist tendencies by hiding the face of the Party and by allowing the campaign to remain in the inner sanctum of the top election campaign committee set up through the Trades Assembly. While in Virden the Communists met and organized both agitation and ward canvassing, in Staunton the Communists called a "vacation" from the Party unit meetings and substituted for them Labor Party meetings. In Staunton, the Party members actually put the Party on the "shelf" at the most urgent hour. They would first go to the Labor Party meetings as individuals, make proposals as individuals, and then, *after* the Labor Party meeting, they would "sometimes" get together, in case something went wrong. Thus, as they did not represent an organized detachment deliberating *before* as well as after meetings, the comrades in Staunton actually put the Party at the tail end of the whole campaign. Although the individual comrades were active, they did not participate in the election campaign as an organized unit; they did not meet as a unit; their energies were unorganized and dissipated.

The outstanding feature of these elections is the fact that Communists can not only be elected, but that, notwithstanding the gathering of all the reactionary forces to defeat them in the next elections, they can be re-elected, provided proper account of their previous tenure is made known to the workers, and especially, if in the course of their first term they have built a strong Party and surrounded themselves with a broad following of workers in their community, through their daily work and struggle. This is clearly shown in Taylor Springs and Benld, in spite of the attendant weaknesses in the campaign. In addition to winning in the election, the Party organizations did actually begin to carry on agitation on a broad scale. Hundreds of workers were reached for the first time with the program of class struggle in these local elections. The Party actually did make a first step towards eliminating the sectarian policy in the elections.

The analysis further shows that the strength of the vote reflected the extent of the Party's entrenchment in the local unions. Only where the Party and the candidates linked their work in the unions and among the unemployed with the election issues, did the vote show real results.

The Communist aldermen were re-elected because they proved that they actually look after the welfare of the workers in their

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community and don't just make speeches. Our comrades are beginning to learn that they must become conscious of every need of the workers, while at the same time they point the way to the complete solution of their problems. For example, ask any young worker or Hod Carriers' Union member in Benld about Gricevich and he will tell you: "There's a real guy for you; he's for us all the time and no maybe about it." When the Hod Carriers had to strike against discrimination on the Water Project, they came to Gricevich and he fought with them for their demands. When the other City Council members tried to prevent the young people from using the City Hall for one meeting or another, it was Gricevich who stood up for the youth.

It is through the work of every Communist that the workers will begin to understand that Communism represents their own interests and that the Communist Party is their own Party.

V. WEAKNESSES AND MISTAKES IN THE ELECTION

The chief weaknesses and mistakes in the course of the campaign can be summarized as follows:

Our Party was sluggish and slow in getting the campaign started. There was a tendency to speculate, to weigh abstractly the opposition forces and to do nothing about it. This tailism our comrades called "seeing what the other side will do". In every town, practically, there was a tendency to narrow down the campaign. The greatest danger was Right opportunism, which expressed itself in manifold ways, including individual negotiations, "capturing" capitalist party tickets, capitulation to reformists and the "Red Scare", evading sharp edges of the struggle, attempting to wait till the "other side attacks us", and so on.

The outstanding weakness in the Labor Party, both in Staunton and Johnstone City, is the lack of sufficient entrenchment in the *local* unions by the Party. We find that it is not sufficient to have one or two comrades in the Trades Assembly. There must be a functioning Communist organization (*e.g.*, a unit in the local and mine). In Staunton as in Johnstone City, our Party succeeded in placing one or two comrades in the leadership of the trade-union movement; but while doing this, *no concentration was carried on to establish mine units* in these same unions represented in the Trades Assembly—units which are the only instrument, in the final analysis, upon which both the Labor Party and the workers depend for carrying out the very good resolutions adopted in the Trades Assembly!

Because of this lack of Communist units, the resolutions of the Trades Assembly were not realized in the local unions. The mis-

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take and weakness in Staunton should forcibly illustrate the erroneous position of the comrades there.

Hiding the face of the Party and capitulation to Red-baiting are still among the main problems to be combatted and overcome. For example, in Staunton the Party prepared a leaflet to be issued by the unit stating its position and endorsing the Labor Party; but when some of the elements in the Labor Party meeting vigorously objected, our comrades capitulated on the ground that they didn't want to provide any possible excuse to the others to say that our statement defeated their chances of winning the election; similarly, comrades capitulated to the Red scare in Johnston City, where the reactionaries charged that if the Labor Party were elected it would put in "a radical chief of police and no one would be safe". Instead of exposing this issue, our comrades here too capitulated to it by denying that a radical would be chief of police. In the whole campaign, although known Communists were active and on the tickets, the Communist Party was not brought out sufficiently.

It is clear that the situation is ripe for building of a Labor Party. It is also clear that the danger of the "Third Party" is real and concrete, especially here in the coal fields, where the reformists and trade-union officials of such organizations as the Progressive Miners of America are attempting to sidetrack the healthy discontent of the miners against the two old capitalist parties into channels of a third capitalist party, such as the Progressive Party, and are endorsing the fascist policies of Coughlin, Long and Milo Reno.

In view of this situation, we are faced with the immediate task of further deepening our agitation for a Labor Party based on the trade unions and mass organizations of the toilers. In the light of the above experiences, the Sub-District Committee, in preparing for the Party Convention in the coal fields, sets forth as the next steps: (1) Deepening of work and agitation in the trade unions for a Labor Party; endorsing of resolutions by locals, assemblies and other bodies in favor of a Labor Party; visiting of other locals by joint Labor Party committees for similar endorsements. (2) Extending further the base of the present workers' tickets and the united front in general, by a more consistent approach to the branches of the Socialist Party, as well as church organizations, in these mining towns. (3) Organizing the elected officials for planned activity and organizing them as a nucleus around which to accelerate the building of the mass Labor Party. (4) As a key towards realizing all this, building the Communist Party and the Young Communist League in the mines, and rooting them in the trade unions.

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Toward the Study of Fascization in the United States

(*A Discussion Article*)

By F. BROWN

TO analyze correctly the rapid development of fascism in the Unlted States, to draw the necessary conclusions for the working class, we must see the relation of the fascist trends in the United States in the light of the developments of fascism in Italy, Germany and other countries. This is necessary in order to mobilize the masses into a powerful united front, not only to check these fascist developments, but to wage a powerful offensive against the attack on the living standards and the democratic rights of the working class. Before going into such an analysis, let us begin with a fundamental question. What is fascism? On an international scale we reach the following definition: *Fascism is the open dictatorship of monopoly capital.* Now, what is its form; how does the political superstructure, the bourgeois State, express itself in the form of fascism? At this point let us consider the main characteristics of fascism: (1) the abolition of the bourgeois democratic parliament or of all its powers; (2) rule through one Party, namely the fascist party as the unified party of capitalism; this implies the unification of the bourgeoisie; (3) the mass support of large sections of the petty bourgeoisie (gained through demagogy and small concessions), as well as of the most backward elements among the proletariat; (4) suppression of all working-class organizations, particularly the Communist Party and the trade unions; (5) a more intensive exploitation of the working class; (6) the herding of the working class into fascist unions which become instruments of the government to impose on the masses the conditions dictated by monopoly capital; (7) the development of chauvinism to its highest expression, in other words, militarization to the highest degree in preparation for imperialist wars; (8) the effort to bring the church into line with fascist doctrine.

Fascism wins mass support through its demagogic program, which step by step drops its initial demagogic cloak to appear finally in its open form, namely, as the open dictatorship of monopoly

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capital. This does not mean that fascism finally gives up demagogy altogether, but at the later stage there are other forms of demagogy, such as the Corporate State, the concept of a "higher" social justice, etc.

At this point let us analyze the development of fascism in Italy and in Germany, so that we may see the extent to which the development of fascism in the United States is following fundamentally the same course.

I

In Italy, fascism was a product of the first post-War stage of the general crisis. It came into power after the defeat of the proletariat as the result of the bankruptcy and reformist ideology of its Socialist Party leadership. The Italian Socialist Party, after having joined the Third International under the pressure of the masses who wanted to follow in the path of their Russian brothers, not only refused to submit to the 21 conditions, but brought about the Livorno split in 1921, thus dividing the forces of the working class at a moment when fascism, still weak, was growing stronger with the support of the bourgeoisie. Fascism appeared in Italy in 1920 in the form of a party with its own organ. At its head was the ex-editor of the central organ of the Socialist Party, well-known for the part he played in the Romagna Red Week. The insignificant Fascist Party came forward with a demagogic program, including proposals for the reduction of individual capital to 100,000 lire, the abolition of the monarchy, the revision of the Versailles Treaty and of the Constituent Assembly. While showing, demagogically, an anti-capitalist, anti-bankers face, to the point of supporting in words the movement for the seizure of factories in the north of Italy, its attack was aimed against the working class, against the Socialist Party, and later on (after the Livorno split), mainly against the Communist Party, the trade unions and the cooperatives. This was done under the guise of "destroying" Bolshevism. While the fascists conducted a demagogic campaign against the weaknesses of the Italian bourgeoisie, which was already in the throes of the general crisis and which came out of the Versailles conference with empty hands, the bourgeoisie supported fascism and protected its drive against the working class and its institutions with every instrument of bourgeois government. The fascists also were able to capitalize on some of the fundamental errors of the Socialist Party, as, for example, its slogan of socialization of the land. Thus, the fascists were able to win the support of the poor farmers and agrarian workers, who after the war, were fighting for more land, for the land which was promised them by the bourgeoisie in 1915.

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It was also on the basis of its demagogy for a "stronger" Italy that would have a "place in the sun", that fascism gained support among the petty bourgeoisie of the city and countryside.

The bourgeoisie was divided into various parties representing the interests of the various branches of capital. While they disagreed with some of the fascist methods, they agreed fundamentally with the fascists on the necessity of crushing the proletariat. Each of the capitalist parties not only helped the fascist party in its struggle against the working class, but one by one entered the one party of capital—the Fascist Party. Only a few impotent liberals attempted to resist the fascist attacks on the bourgeois-democratic form of rule, and these left the battleground quickly (Nitti, Sturzo and others).

Between 1920 and 1925, then, the bourgeois parties in parliament representing various interests inside the sphere of monopoly capital were uniting into a bloc with fascism against the toiling masses represented by the Communists, Socialists, and Left-Wing Catholic deputies. While there was no united front of these representatives of the toiling masses resisting fascism (the position of the Socialist Party at the time of the Matteotti assissination is known by its Aventino policy, its defeatist retreat from parliament and its previous policy of an armistice with the fascists when the street battles were taking the character of civil war), nevertheless, in the factories and in the streets the toiling masses, under the influence of the Communists, were able to unite in struggle in common actions against fascism.

At this point, let us make a brief and general analogy between Germany and Italy in the post-War period.

Germany left the World War a defeated country. Italy, on the contrary, was counted among the bloc of the victors. In reality, Italian capitalism suffered severe losses during the World War, which explains the slogan for the revision of the Versailles Treaty launched by the fascists, one of the slogans around which the fascist party aimed to unite the bourgeoisie and get the support of the petty-bourgeois masses. While in 1919 a tremendous sentiment was created around the Wilson program, especially by the reformist leaders after Versailles, fascism developed a counter-sentiment, especially among the petty-bourgeois masses, when the Wilson program no longer satisfied the wishes of Italian capitalism. In spite of the defeat it suffered as a result of the treacherous role of the reformist leaders, especially in the trade-union field (D'Aragona, Colombino), and in spite of the numerical weakness of the Communist Party, the working class was still a power in Italy in 1922-3-4, and fascism had to subjugate it inch by inch in continual battles such as took place at Parma and Molinella. Hundreds of battles

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took place in all the provinces, in the course of which over 5,000 workers, among them hundreds of Communists gave their lives resisting fascism. Fascism was in power for three years before it dared suppress the Communist and other political parties (including the bourgeois parties which were, however, in practice, already part and parcel of fascism). This shows that in spite of the tremendous apparatus of the fascist party, which had gained control of the governmental apparatus as well, the Communist Party and to some extent the Socialist Party, as well as the Left-Wing of the Catholic Party, were still connected with large masses.

In this brief analysis, we note a fundamental factor—namely, the existence of a fascist party which comes forward at its inception with a demagogic program and is supported by heavy industry, by the landlords, by the brothers Perone (the Italian Thyssen), modifying its program month by month until, as it takes power, it manifests itself in its complete form of open capitalist dictatorship, although still camouflaged in the formula of a Corporate State (in which the workers are only formally represented by appointed fascist leaders).

In Germany, fascism developed in somewhat different conditions. Social-Democracy was in power for years in the post-War period, and was supported by the bourgeoisie. Yet here also we find fascism following the same trends as in Italy. Here also we find a party with a demagogic program, a party that grew by absorbing the bourgeois parties, and in the end embraced practically all the supporters of the bourgeois parties, all of whom confronted a working class divided under the leadership of the Communist and Social-Democratic Parties. What are the essential points of the German fascist program? The abolition of the Versailles Treaty; the abolition of the Weimar Constitution which was weakening the position of the German bourgeoisie in the international arena and preventing the reconstitution of the old Reich; the abolition of the bourgeois-democratic parliament; State control of industry; compulsory military service; suppression of the Jewish people; and above all, the "destruction" of Bolshevism, Marxism (concretely, the Communist Party, the trade unions, the cooperative institutions, etc.), and the development of super-nationalism.

While still claiming to be for this program, the German fascists in practice have conveniently forgotten, for example, the State control of industry. Here, as in Italy, we see fascism making a gesture of attacking the bankers, while in reality launching a systematic attack against the working class and its parties, and supporting the bankers to the limit.

In a comparison between the two fascist programs, the Italian

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and German, we find the persecution of Jews missing in the Italian program. This is to be explained by the fact that Italian fascism could not have conducted a sham attack against the bankers by attacking the Jews, who in Italy constitute a negligible number. By outlawing the Masons, however, and by digging up the "glory" of ancient Rome, etc., the fascists have developed chauvinism to its highest expression. Moreover, in its development the original fascist program has undergone modifications in Italy, whereas the German fascists purport to be carrying out their original program.

In Germany as in Italy, Social-Democracy paved the way for fascism. In Germany, as in Italy, fascist tendencies expressed themselves also outside of the official fascist party. The various German governments, especially the one led by Bruening in which the Social-Democracy participated in coalition, took all kinds of measures to suppress the struggle of the masses, to lower the standard of living, to suppress the workers' rights, curtailing as well the rights granted by the Weimar Constitution. German Social-Democracy did not pave the way for fascism, but in its various theories and practices of class-collaboration and of arbitration, itself brought forward fascist trends to check the struggle of the masses. In Germany as in Italy, *fascism appeared as the method of saving capitalism from the crisis at the expense of the workers, of saving capitalism from proletarian revolution.* This was its fundamental purpose.

III

Now, how does fascism express itself in the United States? Before answering this question we have to compare first the differences between American, Italian, and German capitalism during the post-War period. American capitalism not only was stronger than German and Italian capitalism, but in the United States the elements of the Versailles Treaty were missing. The United States was one of the victorious imperialist Powers that sucked the gold of all the other belligerents. During the World War it expanded its industrial productive apparatus to the point where this enormous apparatus laid the basis, not only for a crisis in the United States itself (due to the inherent contradictions of the capitalist mode of production), but for the intensification of the crisis on a world scale.

In the United States capitalism had not yet been confronted by a coordinated attack of large masses of workers under the direct leadership of the Communist Party to the proportion that German capitalism was. And today, although large masses are in motion, the struggle of the masses is much more split up than in Germany. The last elections, for example, show that, despite the increase of class conscious votes for the Communist Party, the masses' will to

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struggle was divided between the support they gave to the Epic movement, the Farmer-Labor Party, the Commonwealth Builders, the Progressives and the Socialist Party. Yet the movement of the masses in the economic field has taken on such proportion, and such a drive for unity, that in spite of the various influences played by the various bourgeois parties of the "Left", American capitalism feels the growing danger of the mass upsurge. This was openly expressed in the speech of General Johnson, in which he said that a year ago the United States was on the verge of a revolution. This explains not only the measures against the working class taken under the demagogic cloak of the N.R.A., but also the measures taken by the McCormick-Dickstein Bill presented in Congress and in the bills presented in a dozen states for the suppression of the Communist Party or its removal from the ballot.

While in the United States the mass Socialist Party that was a factor in Germany, and to some degree in Italy, does not exercise a mass influence to the same extent, which means that a parallel role, in the absolute sense, is missing as compared with German or Italian Social-Democracy, the leaders of the American Federation of Labor in the United States, in cooperation with and supported by the leaders of the Socialist Party, are playing the role of the German and Italian Social-Democracy in paving the way for fascism.

VI

It is important to note the position of leading Socialist spokesmen. Algernon Lee, for example, who has taken Norman Thomas's place in the *New Leader*, says in the March 16 issue of that organ: "I do not believe that there is any specific danger of fascism in the United States. Long and Coughlin are but two more in a long list of demagogues. . . ."

Trotsky goes so far as to say that in the United States "the revolution will be smoother in character than the Russian Revolution", and, "as to comparatively few opponents of Soviet Revolution, one can trust to American inventive genius". (*Liberty* magazine, March 23.) In other words, in the U.S., Trotsky's "revolution" will take the character of a Sunday picnic at which the Wall Street robbers, the Morgans, Mellons, Fords and Rockefellers, "converted" by Trotsky's articles in *Liberty*, will appear with flaming red carnations in their buttonholes. What better proof that they are paving the way to fascism?

This is taking place despite the increasing attack of Roosevelt against the A. F. of L. unions. The masses in the trade unions have started to fight over the heads of the bureaucratic leadership, as is evidenced by the increasing strength of the rank-and-file movement in the A. F. of L. under the leadership of the Communists;

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the bureaucrats are finding it increasingly difficult to hold back the struggles of the masses. Roosevelt's aim, in attacking the A. F. of L., is to hold these bureaucrats in line with the administration will.

One important element that has not yet appeared in the development of fascism in the United States is an openly-organized Fascist Party. The Khaki Shirts, the Blue Shirts, the Silver Shirts, and other similar manifestations, such as the proposal made by Wall Street bankers to General Butler, were all abortive measures in the hands, so to speak, of dilettantes. Yet it is important to note that even without a party the developing fascist process is going on very rapidly. This offensive expresses itself in the general attack against the standards of living of the masses, in the increasing political suppression of the democratic rights of the masses; in the drive for company unionization and wholesale injunctions; in the growing attacks against the poor farmers, the agricultural workers, the tenant farmers and sharecroppers in the South. It expresses itself in the growing attack against the Negro people and the foreign-born masses; the subtle spreading of anti-Semitism; in the wave of American chauvinism, accompanied by a more intensive militarization drive (new armaments, C.C.C. camps, etc.), and in the sharpening of the specific attacks against the Communist Party. *It is clear, however, that the fascization offensive expresses itself primarily through the N.R.A., the Roosevelt government policies veiled with the demagogy of "Security for All".*

IV

The analysis of the N.R.A. in the Eighth Party Convention Resolution of the Communist Party has been eloquently confirmed by recent developments. The N.R.A. is revealing itself so openly as an instrument of fascization, that already differentiations are taking place in the ruling camp, expressed by "liberal" tendencies against Roosevelt in the House of Representatives and in the Senate. Outside the N.R.A., fascism finds expression not only in the various grouplets springing up everywhere under the stimulus of the Chambers of Commerce and of banking groups, as well as in an enforcement of all the reactionary measures on the statute books, particularly in the South, but also by three other currents, namely: Huey Long's "Share-the-Wealth Program", Father Coughlin's "National Union for Social Justice", and Hearst's attack against the Communist Party. Here we see the division of labor in the forces of fascism: Huey Long's "Share-the-Wealth" program, speaking in favor of the petty bourgeoisie and sounding very much like the original demagogic program of Mussolini; Coughlin's program, while supposed to be aimed at Wall Street, while making a show of attacking the advisers of Roosevelt, actually attempting to unify

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the most reactionary forces in Congress; Hearst, venomously attacking the Communist Party and the Soviet Union and demanding the destruction of Bolshevism, utilizing counter-revolutionary Trotskyites and Socialists like Harry Lang for the purpose. *Here we have a fascist combination outside of and parallel with the N.R.A.*

The problem before us is not only to analyze these various tendencies, but to see where these tendencies are leading to determine to what extent these fascist manifestations have a common base. While it is premature to predict that in a short time we will be confronted with a fascist party with a full-fledged fascist program, we must face the possibility.

V

Through what channels will such a party be developed? There is the possibility that under the pressure of monopoly capital, a reactionary bloc will be formed by closer ties between the reactionary forces of the Democratic and Republican Parties, working within the N.R.A. Because the leader of such a bloc would be discredited in the eyes of the masses, the bloc would seek some popular figure like Coughlin (although it is clear that the priest himself will not be a presidential candidate). Such a bloc would reinforce the fascist line of the N.R.A. or could speed the process of fascization without the demagogy of the N.R.A., using other demagogic covers and eventually the Constitution itself by passing, under the cover of the Constitution, new laws fitting their needs for open dictatorial powers, Concretely, the reinforcement of all the existing reactionary laws, plus the new ones that would be passed, through the various loopholes in the Constitution, would abrogate all civil rights embodied in the Constitution, *would give more power to the instruments of the capitalist government.*

Thus we would have a fascist party in embryo as part and parcel of the administration. Then there is the possibility that a broad fascist movement, without taking the form of an organized party in the first stage, can develop outside of the N.R.A., seemingly in opposition to the New Deal. In its development this movement would bring together the more reactionary elements of both major parties, Republican and Democratic. Such a maneuver is being directed by the American Thyssens with Coughlin as the mask of the movement.

Furthermore, there is the possibility of a new wave of promises by the Roosevelt administration as a means of attempting to stop the growing disillusionment with the Democratic Party, with the aim of gaining the support of the so-called progressive elements (the Olsons, the LaFollettes, etc.), and so preventing the move for a third party. In this case a new demagogy would cover the fascist

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trends of the Roosevelt administration, and the fascization process of the N.R.A. would continue under the mask of liberalism and constitutionality.

Notwithstanding these maneuvers certain things are clear: masses will desert the Roosevelt camp; the disillusionment with the Republican and Democratic Parties will continue to spread and increase; a third party of the bourgeoisie with a "Left" liberal program, built by the elements unwilling to support Roosevelt, is possible.

VI

At this point let us look back for a moment. In Germany, in addition to the fascist party, fascist tendencies were manifested by the various governments preceding fascism: in fact, by the Social-Democratic governments themselves (class collaboration, arbitration, police repression of workers' struggles, etc.). The fascist program was supported by the Nationalist Party, an offspring of fascism, to a large extent, especially in its attacks on the one hand against the working class and Bolshevism (the Communist Party), and on the other hand against the Weimar Constitution. Yet the main trend of the fascization offensive was carried through by the Fascist Party, financed by heavy industry. In the United States, as stated before, such a party is missing. *The center of gravity of the fascization is found in the Roosevelt government itself.* While the American bourgeoisie, like the German bourgeoisie before Hitler, is marching on the road to fascism, the development is taking a different course. The Weimar Constitution in Germany, as the outcome of the bourgeois revolution of 1918, did not suit either the bourgeoisie or the proletariat, inasmuch as the aim of the bourgeoisie was "back to the old Reich", and the aim of the most advanced part of the proletariat was—*the proletarian revolution*, for which they fought in 1918 but of which they were robbed by the betrayal of Social-Democracy. However, despite the fact that they fought for the proletarian revolution and against the Weimar Constitution, the workers continued to fight for the civil rights gained in decades of struggle.

Now we can ask the question: To what extent do the masses in the United States believe in the Constitution? While it is true that the Constitution in the United States has to all intents and purposes been reduced to a hollow mockery, the masses still see the Bill of Rights in that Constitution. This means that while the fascization process going on will try to utilize the Constitution as a legal cover for further fascization, for reactionary laws that will be passed to coincide with the open dictatorial aims of monopoly capital, there will be masses who will struggle for the upholding of the democratic guarantees in the Bill of Rights. So that, in the development

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of the fascization process in the United States, the problem will arise: What kind of constitution? A constitution that conceals the open dictatorship of monopoly, or a constitution for a workers' democracy, developing out of the mass struggle, that will safeguard the democratic rights already gained and will extend them through the revolutionary struggle for real workers' democracy? In other words, open dictatorship, fascism—or the proletarian State. At this point we have to consider that on this basis of the struggle around civil rights the united front will be extended to reach those elements that will fight for these rights, that will identify themselves with the right to organize, the right of free speech, of assembly, of a free press, etc.

The fundamental trend in the United States, it is clear, is the orientation of the American bourgeoisie towards fascism. This is expressed through the Roosevelt administration primarily, and by the Longs, Coughlins and other reactionary forces secondly.

This means that while our task today is to follow up all fascist manifestations and unmask them day by day, the main problem is the development of the struggle of the masses on the economic and political field, the development of the struggle against the lowering of the standard of living in connection with the struggle for workers' rights, showing in the course of this struggle how the process of fascization leads directly to the open terrorist dictatorship of monopoly capitalism.

Day by day we have to show to the masses the analogy of the demagogic "Security Program" of Roosevelt, of the "Share-the-Wealth" program of Huey Long and the fascist program of Coughlin, with Hitler fascism and with Mussolini fascism. We must show concretely where the "Security Program" of Roosevelt has led to more intensive exploitation, to greater suppression of workers' rights, etc. At this point we must be on guard also against immediately labeling as full-fledged fascism all kinds of reactionary manifestations. Similarly, we must bear in mind that by simply labeling a certain demagogy formation as fascism we do not yet convince the masses of our correctness. It is necessary to make the masses see with us by explaining to them why we characterize Huey Long, Coughlin, Hearst and primarily the N.R.A. as fascist manifestations. Today, when the fascist manifestations are so numerous, when we can already see the general trend of the American bourgeoisie towards fascism as their means of trying to solve the crisis at the expense of the workers and check the course of the struggles toward the proletarian revolution, we have to explain how the increased reaction, the intensification of all the reactionary measures of the ruling class, are fitting into the general development of fascism.

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VII

On the basis of the changes that are taking place in the country and on an international scale, the line of the Communist Party of strengthening itself in the A. F. of L. unions; of leading the masses to make of these unions their mass weapons of struggle against the exploiters; of developing united-front struggles around the issues of unemployment and social insurance, anti-war and fascism, and the defense of the Soviet Union; of appealing to the masses to build an anti-capitalist Labor Party, was correct and its correctness is clearly proved today. In the face of the rapid development of fascism which leads toward a more solid unification of the bourgeois forces, the tempo of the work of class-conscious workers inside the mass organizations of the toiling masses, in the widening of the united front, in becoming the driving force to crystallize the sentiment of the masses for a Labor Party, has to be increased to the utmost.

How do we explain the daily attacks against the Communist Party, which is still numerically weak; how do we explain all of the bills for the suppression of the Communist Party if not in the knowledge of the ruling class that the Communist Party, in spite of its numerical weakness, *is growing in strength, and is connecting itself daily with larger masses, is the factor that can and will coordinate and lead the struggles of the masses, that can and will unify them in the realization that the issue is—class against class—fascist dictatorship or workers' democracy—dictatorship of the proletariat.*

The situation and the perspectives dictate clearly the tasks for the class-conscious workers and their allies. It becomes necessary to wage a more intensive struggle against the Roosevelt administration, which means, concretely, a more intensive struggle against the lowering of the standards of living of the masses, against the high cost of living; for the right to organize and bargain collectively with the bosses; for the Workers' Bill H.R. 2827; against repressive measures aimed at the Communist Party; for widening the united front, by explaining to the masses how the attacks against the Communist Party are attacks against the entire working class; for the exposure day by day of all the various fascist manifestations; for gaining support for the Communist Party in its leadership of the struggles of the masses, not only against the government, as previously stated, but against the bureaucratic leaders of the A. F. of L. who yield to fascism.

The class-conscious workers must be the driving force in the movement towards a powerful Labor Party built on class lines that will give expression to the united independent action of the toiling masses—a powerful Labor Party that will beat back the fascist attacks and will mobilize the toiling masses of the U.S.A. for the revolutionary way out, for a Soviet America.

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The Development of Struggle for Negro Rights

[*Resolution Adopted by the Chicago District Committee of the C.P. on Work in Chicago South Side* (*Sections* 2, 7, *and* 11).]

THE situation on the South Side offers tremendous possibilities for immediately building the broadest united front mass struggles for Negro rights, for strengthening the unity of Negro and white workers and for building the Party, the Young Communist League, the trade unions and the mass organizations.

The so-called Black Belt (Negro Jim-Crow area) where the majority of Chicago's 270,000 Negro population reside, is the second largest Negro city in the world. Chicago's Black Belt has become a real metropolis, a political-cultural center for great masses of the country's Negro population living in the lower Mississippi Valley region and the West. During the World War and in the few years following it, Chicago was the mecca for mighty migratory waves embracing tens of thousands of Negroes fleeing from the horrors of peonage and lynch law in the South.

As a result we find concentrated in the basic industries of Chicago and its environs—steel mills, stockyards, railroads—the greatest mass of genuine Negro industrial workers in the country.

The sharpest point of the New Deal attack against the living standards and rights of Chicago's toilers is directed against the Negro masses. This is due to the fact that this attack is taking place against a background of national oppression (Jim-Crow, discrimination), which even before the crisis determined the position of Negroes as an especially oppressed minority group, with lower standards and less rights then any other section of Chicago's population. This special oppression of the Negro masses in Chicago has its direct source in the half-slave position of the Negroes in the South, in the system of plantation slavery, peonage, disfranchisement and lynching. The methods and practices of the Southern slave drivers are to a large degree carried over by the Chicago ruling class, and used by them to secure the position of the Negroes as a reservoir of cheap labor in the industries—a source of extra profits—and to foster friction and division between Negro and white workers, thus hindering the united organization of the working class against the sharpening capitalist attacks.

In view of the above it is clear that:

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1. The task of building a mass movement on the South Side for the rights of Negroes is of immediate and decisive importance for the Party and revolutionary movement. Such a movement can and must be made a powerful bulwark for the fight of the entire working class of the city of Chicago against the wage-cutting, starvation drive of the employers, for a united front of the workers for better conditions and against the threat of war and fascism.

2. Because of the importance of Chicago (the country's second largest Negro center, containing the largest concentration of Negro industrial workers), such a movement would exert a great influence in the strengthening of the fight for Negro liberation throughout the country.

The recent period has witnessed a ten-fold increase of Jim-Crow oppression of Chicago's Negro population. The great majority of the Negro masses are unemployed, existing on starvation relief rations, one-third lower than that of any other section of the population. Jim-Crowism on the jobs (in the stockyards, steel mills, railroad shops), on work-relief projects, is being progressively strengthened. Negro workers, confined to the lowest categories of work, are especially victimized by mass lay-offs, wage-cuts, etc.

Chicago's Black Belt is a virtual prison, in which the masses of Negroes are squeezed in and smothered between rigid Jim-Crow walls in an area hardly half the size necessary for their normal needs. Here they are victims of frightful over-crowding and are forced to pay triple rents for run-down, vermin-ridden shacks and apartments, in many cases lacking ordinary sanitary conveniences. Under the double blows of the employers' attacks and the sharpened Jim-Crow policies of the big landlords, the housing and health conditions of Negroes have reached an acuteness unequaled in history. While living standards have reached new low levels, rents have gone up. *Recently rents were increased by one-third.* The relief authorities conspire with the real estate sharks to dump unemployed Negroes into shacks unfit for human habitation. It is impossible for relief clients to rent decent apartments. Merchants and store-keepers take advantage of residential Jim-Crowism further to fleece the population, charging outrageously high prices for inferior foodstuffs and other articles of necessity. The prices of food in the Black Belt are notoriously higher than in any other section of the city. This concerted drive of the employers, landlords, and big merchants has led to still further over-crowding in the Negro neighborhoods. Families are forced to double up; in many cases three or four families are forced to live in a single apartment and pool their meager earnings to pay robber rents. The results are frightful suffering, unspeakable misery, and degradation. Starvation, in fact actual extermination, faces masses

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of the Negro population in the city of Chicago. This is clearly witnessed by the alarming increase of death and disease rates in the Negro neighborhoods.

In face of this criminal robbery and torture of a whole people, real estate companies, together with various businessmen's associations, and with the support of the American Legion and other fascist groups, are carrying through plans to restrict further the Negro neighborhoods, to push Negroes back further into the already overcrowded Jim-Crow belts. (Planned eviction of thousands of Negro families in the near-North Side; similar attempts at mass eviction of Negroes in the Westworth Avenue area—48th to 51st; also from the block on South Park from 60th to 61st.)

These vicious attacks upon the living standards and rights of Negro people are accompanied by increased police terror and provocation. An unbridled campaign of Negro-baiting has been unloosed by various business and real estate owners' associations. In this a leading role is being played by the Chicago Chamber of Commerce, with the tacit support of the city administration and the police force. This terror is concentrated mainly on the borders of the Black Belt, where attacks on Negroes are common. Organized groups of hoodlums terrorize Negro residents, breaking windows, tearing off mail boxes, posting swastika signs, etc.

The sharpening attacks are provoking widespread discontent among the Negro toilers. There is noticeable on all hands a growing militancy and an increased desire to resist these encroachments on their rights. This militant sentiment among the Negro masses found a very definite expression recently in the resistance of the Moslems (a religious sect) to the unprovoked attack of the police during the trial of members of their organization, and also in the threatened rent strike in the Rosenwald apartment building.

In the face of increased persecution of the masses, their rising resentment, a situation which offers the greatest opportunity for the development of mass struggle, we find the Party unable to place itself at the head of the masses and to direct their growing militancy into channels of organized resistance in defense of their burning needs. The Party finds itself largely isolated, with weak connections with the Negro masses and their organizations. The explanation for this lies in the following:

1. Lack of clearly defined political perspective for the development of struggles for the most pressing needs of the masses, and an absence of a concrete program for the building of a united movement for Negro rights throughout the South Side.

2. Failure to understand, and inability to apply the United Front tactic as a guiding policy in our mass work (failure to pen-

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etrate the fraternal societies, etc., and to build fractions and rank-and-file movements within them as a guarantee for real united front actions).

3. Prevalence of sectarian moods and methods of work among considerable sections of the Party membership as well as in the mass organizations, expressed in an underestimation of the willingness of the Negro masses to struggle; failure to react to issues in the territory; a narrow inner orientation, and lack of initiative of the units.

4. Failure to develop a real collective, authoritative leadership through the collective working out of decisions and the fixing of individual responsibility for carrying them into effect, resulting in the improper utilization of our forces. A tendency exists for a few comrades on top to decide all policies, etc., without involving the Party membership as a whole. The units do not receive systematic day-to-day guidance from the Section leadership.

5. Extreme organizational looseness from top to bottom, expressed in improper functioning of Party committees, Sections, unit bureaus, captain groups, fractions in trade unions, and mass organizations.

6. Low political development in the life of the units; lack of political discussion, low sales of literature; weak development of cadres; absence of classes for Party functionaries and new members, of forums, and of other educational activities.

Consequently we find that Party recruiting in all South Side Sections is exceedingly weak and there is an extremely high turnover in our Party membership. In the case of Section Two, a definite decline in the Party membership is to be seen. The concentration and control tasks of the Sections are but weakly carried out. The tasks of building the unions in the concentration industries (packing, steel), the organization of fractions, the development of rank-and-file movements in the A. F. of L. locals and the independent unions in the South Side, particularly in Sections Two and Seven are not being systematically forwarded. Mass organizations, such as the Unemployment Councils and the International Labor Defense, are not being built and the *Negro Liberator* is not even sold. Till recently certain progress could be recorded in Section Eleven (Stockyards). There we saw the beginning of penetration into the A. F. of L. unions and for a time a growth of the Party and the Y.C.L. (the building of shop nuclei), because our Party members joined the unions and began seriously to organize and work among the stockyards workers. However, at the present moment there has been a slackening of the work. This is the result of our inability to meet a new situation of sharpened attacks against the workers; mass lay-

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offs, etc. This situation demands an immediate reorganization of our forces and an intensification of our activities.

While the Party finds itself isolated and unable to develop mass struggles, the reformists are becoming increasingly active. The N.A.A.C.P. and the National Urban League have recently organized numerous conferences on the housing situation and slum clearance questions. On these questions their activities have been designed to throttle the growing militancy of the masses and to direct their resentment into reactionary utopian channels. (The advocacy of consumers' cooperatives as a solution for the ills confronting the Negroes at the recent conference called by the Urban League.) The Socialists, too, have recently penetrated the South Side, setting up headquarters in the second ward. Under their leadership the Chicago Workers Committee movement has registered considerable growth among the Negro masses.

In order to overcome our shortcomings on the South Side, to break through the present isolation, to build the Party, the Y.C.L., the trade unions and the mass organizations in the process of leadership of mass struggles, the following is necessary:

1. The establishment of a clear political perspective for the building of a broad united front mass movement for Negro rights on the South Side. Such a movement can be brought into being only by initiating struggles around the most burning needs of the masses. Upon examining the situation the District Committee is of the opinion that the three most pressing issues agitating the masses of Negroes at the present time are the questions of: (a) relief; (b) high rents; (c) high cost of living. While these are the issues facing every section of Chicago's toiling population, they are especially sharp among the Negroes because of the policy of Jim-Crowism. Around these three issues it is possible to develop immediately the widest, united front mass movement embracing the broadest sections of the Negro masses, together with the white toilers. Therefore, our central slogans shall be: (1) *Drive Down Rents!* Abolish rent differences between Negro and white neighborhoods! The right of unemployed to rent all buildings! The right of Negroes to live in all neighborhoods! (2) *Increased and Cash Relief!* Smash Jim-Crow methods in distribution of relief! (3) *Against the High Cost of Living!* Abolish Jim-Crow food prices on the South Side! For the repeal of the Sales Tax!

In line with the above all Sections and units are to carry through immediately the following:

1. Begin immediately, through the Unemployment Councils, through visiting and involving Workers Committees, Unions, Churches, Lodges, etc., the building of united actions, the formation

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of block committees for the restoration of relief, increased and cash relief, against evictions, etc.; building up such committees in the course of house to house canvassing with leaflets and literature, arranging neighborhood mass meetings, demonstrations before relief stations, homes of public officials, etc., sending of delegations with destitute families to ward aldermen, demanding immediate action on their cases, etc. In the course of this activity we shall lay the base for the fullest participation of Negro workers on the South Side in all city, county and state-wide actions on these questions.

2. At the same time each Section should pick out a certain neighborhood where large apartment buildings are located, concentrate on one particular building, and begin the organization of tenants against high rents and for rent reductions. Meetings of tenants shall be called and tenant committees set up. In this manner we shall work toward the organization of strikes *for the reduction of rent.*

3. The movement around both of these issues (relief, rent) must be tied up with a fight against the high cost of living, the sales tax, etc., raising the demand: *Increased cash relief to meet the rising cost of food and high rent!* In this manner we shall work for strong representation from the South Side to the city-wide conference against the high cost of living, June 2. In this connection delegations to relief authorities should be organized, etc.

In this way we will build up the movement along lines of united front from below in the neighborhood, based on block and tenants' committees, involving mass organizations in the neighborhoods, unions, churches, etc., working for the organization of a united front conference in the South Side around these issues. This movement must be accompanied by the widest agitation; mass distribution of literature; mass meetings, indoor and open air; exposures, the organization of public hearings, etc.

Starting the movement around these urgent issues, it shall be our aim continuously to broaden it out by bringing in related issues such as: right to jobs, against bad housing and health conditions, for a program of immediate slum clearance, etc.; systematically turning the whole movement into the direction of smashing through all Jim-Crow barriers, particularly residential discrimination, as an important source of many of the evils facing the Negro population. All Sections and units on the South Side are immediately to concretize this program to their respective territories and work out plans for developing struggle around these issues, based on the principle of concentration.

In the development of this work it shall be our aim to lay a firm basis for the realization on a local scale of our major political task in Negro work nationally, namely:

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1. The promotion of the movement for the National Congress on Negro Rights, tying up our local campaign with the general issues around which this Congress will be convened, such as the campaign for the enactment of the L.S.N.R. Bill for Civil Rights, for the freedom of the Scottsboro Boys and Herndon, against lynching, etc.

2. Lay the basis for the bringing of the masses of Negro people around the general demands of the class struggle (H. R. 2827, etc.) in the formation of a Labor Party.

In building this movement we shall have the following objectives:

1. To carry through a campaign for the unionization of the Negro masses of the South Side; to build the unions, particularly in steel and packing, through mass recruitment of Negro workers into the A. F. of L., the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers, and the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of North America; to strengthen our fractions and rank-and-file groups within these unions by bringing the issues of the united front sharply forward in spite of the sabotage of the bureaucrats. The stockyards concentration shall not be confined to Section Eleven, but must receive the utmost attention of Sections Two and Seven; both these Sections shall place special emphasis on the recruiting of stockyards workers in their respective territories, and direct all agitation and activity with a view of especially reaching these workers.

In the railroad industry, the key tasks shall be to penetrate the Brotherhood of Pullman Porters; to build and strengthen the fraction in the Dining Car Employees; to concentrate around the various shops (R.I., N.Y.C.—I.C.), building shop nuclei; and to promote the Railroad Brotherhood Unity Movement. The Party fractions in this movement must raise sharply the fight against Jim-Crowism, for the right of Negroes to jobs, etc. Likewise, it is necessary to build and strengthen fractions in the unions on the South Side.

All our trade union activities in the immediate period shall be directed towards bringing the greatest number of unions into the city-wide conference on May 26 called by a number of A. F. of L. unions to discuss the problems of making Chicago a 100 per cent union city, etc.

2. The two most important mass organizations upon which we shall concentrate to build shall be the Unemployment Councils and the International Labor Defense. In the course of this movement these organizations must be real driving forces within the united front, developing independent activities around the question of relief, H. R. 2827, defense, etc., independently organizing broad masses of workers with a view of becoming the two largest organizations on the South Side.

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The carrying through of the above tasks demands that we immediately clarify the united front tactic among the Party membership, and organize our forces for the penetration of the Negro mass organizations, churches, unions, lodges, etc., establishing an organizational base in these organizations by the building of fractions, and by the development of rank and file movements around these issues in spite of the treachery and sabotage of the misleaders and as a guarantee for successful united front mass actions.

We can carry through this program of action, providing we strengthen the Party and properly mobilize the Party membership to take the lead in the development of these struggles; overcome the sectarian moods and methods of work; develop collective leadership; overcome organizational looseness; give attention to the units; (establish functioning unit bureaus; promote discussion); and to the fractions in unions and organizations; train and promote cadres; improve the political life of the units through the establishment of classes; and build the circulation of the *Daily Worker* and the *Negro Liberator*. During the course of independent activity of the Party we must, in the simplest language, draw the lessons for the workers, bringing forward our full program of national liberation for the Negro people, equal rights, self-determination for the Black Belt, and the fight for the land. All activity must be accompanied by an energetic and persistent campaign of recruitment of the most militant workers, Negro and white, for the Party.

In the course of these activities, it shall be our aim to build the Young Communist League, through the drawing of young workers into the united front on the basis of their special demands, assisting the Y.C.L. in the development of independent youth activities in connection with the united front, simultaneously carrying through energetic recruitment of the most militant youth into the Y.C.L. Special attention must be given to assisting the Y.C.L. in the preparations for National Youth Day.

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